

THE

ATIONAL ALLERY

A Selection from its Pictures.

ENGRAVED BY GEORGE DOO, WILLIAM FINDEN, JOHN AND HENRY LE KEUX,
JOHN PYE, EDWARD GOODALL, JOHN BURNET, W. BROMLEY,
GEORGE COOKE AND OTHERS.

WITH

BIOGRAPHICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE LETTERPRESS.

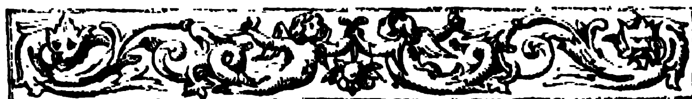


A NEW EDITION, FROM THE ORIGINAL PLATES

London:
CHATTO AND WINDUS, PUBLISHERS.
1875.

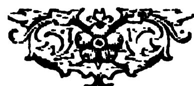


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THE ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS.

Rembrandt van Rhyn.









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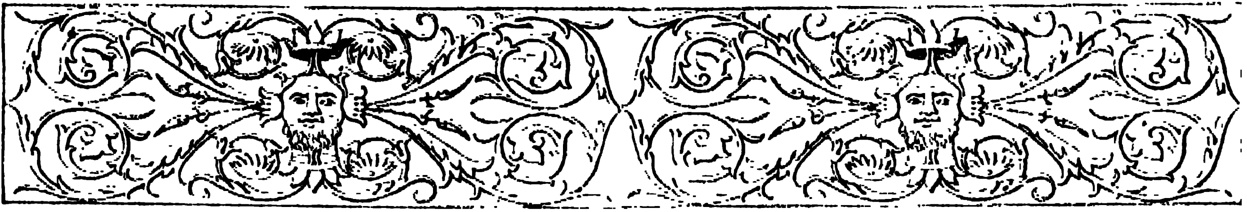
REMBRANDT VAN RHYN

REMBRANDT, the great master of the Dutch school, whom Fuseli designates "a meteor in art," was of humble extraction; yet the force of his genius, and his persevering industry, overcame the disadvantages of birth, and obtained for him a permanent and deserved renown. He was the son of a miller named Herman Gerretz, but called VAN RHYN, from the situation of his mill near a branch of the Rhine, adjacent to Leyerdorp; and in that mill (or its attached dwelling), on the 15th of June 1606, Rembrandt was born. His lively disposition induced his father to send him to the College at Leyden; but scholastic learning was not his *forte*, and he was removed to Amsterdam, to study the principles of painting and design, for which arts he had evinced a strong passion. His biographers disagree as to the names of his first instructors; but Houbraken, on whose authority we can best rely, assures us that he was placed in the school of Jacques Van Swanenbourg, with whom he continued three years; after which he became, for about six months, the pupil of Peter Lastman, and on leaving him, practised for some time under Jacques Pinas. But whatever acquirements he might derive from those masters, or however their precepts were recollected in his future studies, it is certain that his exalted fame is due alone to the vigour, application, and originality of his own talents, and particularly to his transcendent power of colouring, which imparted to his compositions a brilliancy and effect of the highest order. After leaving Pinas he returned to his father's mill, where he diligently pursued the study of his art; and by admitting the rays of light into his painting-room only through a single aperture, and by other experiments in obtaining strong shadows, he acquired that comprehensive knowledge of light and shade, the almost magical effect of which so peculiarly distinguishes his works from the productions of all other artists. "He tinged his pencil," says Fuseli (in that discriminating and powerful language which made his lectures so impressive), "with equal success in the cool of dawn, in the noontide ray, in the vivid flash, in evanescent twilight, and rendered darkness visible!"

Rembrandt is, by some writers, supposed to have visited Venice in 1635, that date, with the name of the city, being marked on three of his etchings; * yet others state that he never was in Italy, and that the supposition merely rests on the circumstance just related. From the sale of a picture, for one hundred florins, to a connoisseur at the Hague, his abilities, as an artist, first became known and his works popular. His consequent celebrity occasioned his removal to Amsterdam, where he established a school, and obtained so much employment, that, according to Sandrart, his yearly income amounted to 2400 florins. Notwithstanding this success, his means failed, and he was involved in bankruptcy; but from what cause has not been ascertained. The original papers relating to his insolvency were recently discovered among the records in the Stadt-house at Amsterdam, together with the sale catalogue of his pictures, drawings, &c., which were sold publicly by the young Haring (whose portrait he etched) on the 25th and 26th of July 1665. There was also found a legal document signed by Titus Van Rhyn (only son of Rembrandt Van Rhyn and Saskia Van Uylenburg, both deceased), acknowledging the receipt of 6952 florins 9 sols for the purchase of the house of his father, situated in the St Anthony's Bree-straat in that city. This deed bears date the 9th of September 1665, and is remarkable from thus tacitly contravening the reputed time of Rembrandt's death, which De Piles and Deschamps state to have taken place in 1668, and Houbraken in 1674. The latest date found on any of his etchings (namely, on that called "*The Woman with the Arrow*") is 1661, in which year he painted the celebrated piece of "*The Five Syndics of Amsterdam,*" now in the public collection of that city. His works are mostly of small dimensions.

The picture before us, which represents "*The Adoration of the Shepherds at the Nativity of Our Saviour,*" was painted in 1646. About the year 1799 it was purchased in Paris, for the sum of 10,100 francs, by the Baron d'Este, who sold it to the late Mr Angerstein for 950 guineas. It is on canvas: height, 2 feet 1 inch; width, 1 foot 10 inches.

* One of them is reputed to be the portrait of Cats, preceptor to the Prince of Orange.—Rembrandt's etchings are numerous: nearly 400 undisputed pieces are known to be extant; independently of about 240 variations, and between 50 and 60 which are considered questionable. An extensive and very fine collection of these works, probably the first in Europe, is in the British Museum.



THE VILLAGE FESTIVAL.

(*See Frontispiece.*)

DAVID WILKIE, R.A.

DAVID WILKIE was born in the year 1785, at Cults, in Fifeshire, of which parish his father, the Rev. David Wilkie, was minister. His pursuits, at an early age, indicated such considerable talent and so great an inclination for painting, that his parents were induced to send him to Edinburgh for the purpose of continuing his studies at the Academy founded in that city for the Encouragement of the Fine Arts; and which was then under the direction of Mr John Graham, an artist possessing every qualification for the situation.

Wilkie's talents for subjects of familiar life, and the recommendations of his friends, determined him to devote his attention to that branch of the art; and although on his arrival in London, in 1805, he practised portrait-painting for a short period, the success of his first picture exhibited at the Royal Academy in the same year—namely, "*The Village Politicians*"—decided both his own and the public choice; and, by a succession of splendid pictures, he ever after sustained that high station in the arts which was then awarded to his great merits.

In November 1809, Mr Wilkie was chosen an Associate of the Royal Academy, and in February 1811 he was elected a Royal Academician. In 1823, on the decease of Sir Henry Raeburn, he was appointed by George the Fourth, his Majesty's Limner for Scotland. His health having suffered from intense application, Wilkie went abroad about the middle of 1825, and during a three years' continuance on the Continent he travelled into Italy and Spain, and whilst in the latter country painted, among other works, a series of pictures commemorative of the late war in the Peninsula, now in the Royal Collection. In January 1830, soon after the decease of Sir Thomas Lawrence (on the 7th of that month), who had previously held the situation, George the Fourth appointed Mr Wilkie his Principal Painter in Ordinary, an appointment which was renewed by William the Fourth. The artist died in 1841.

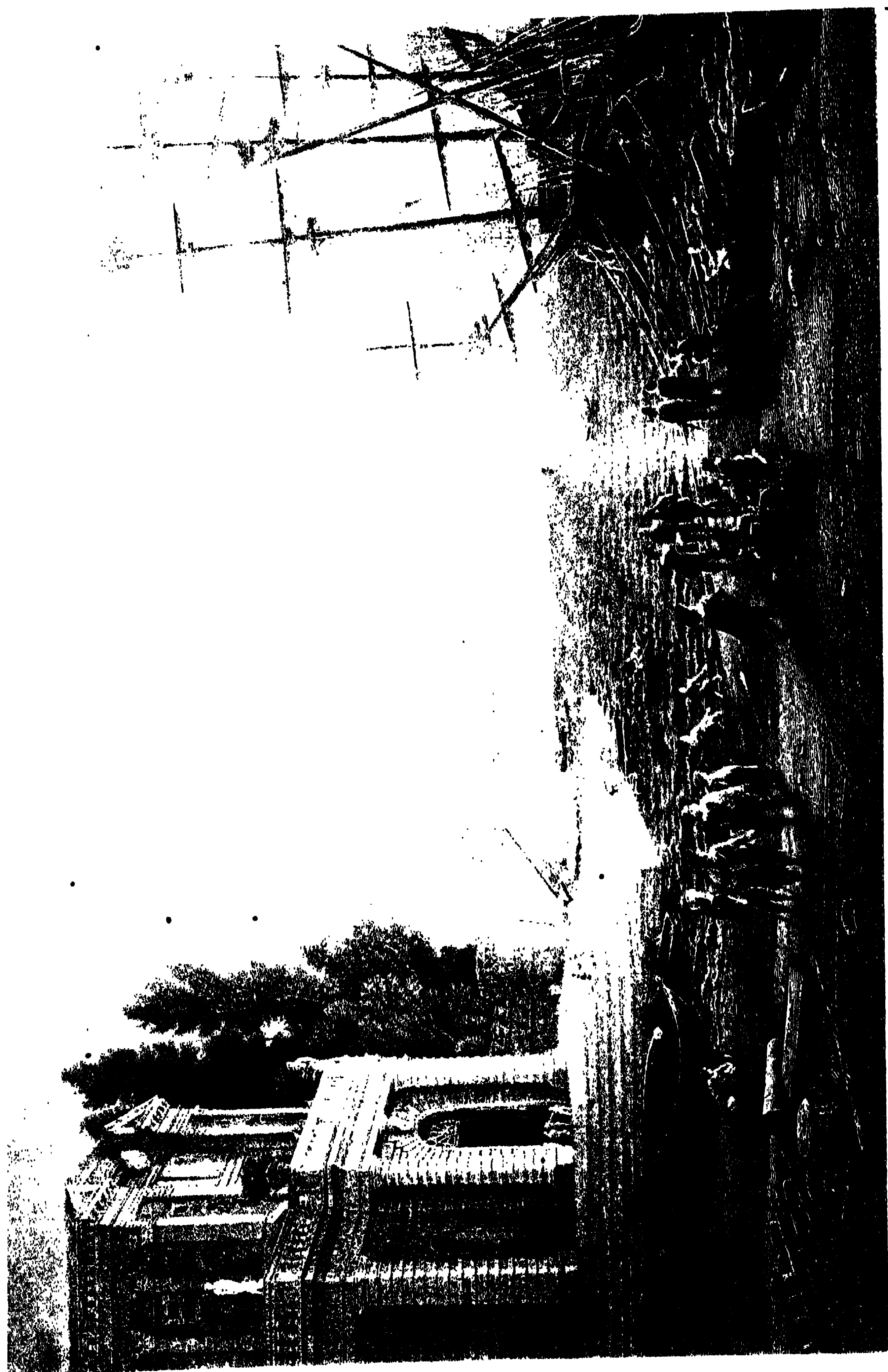
"*The Village Festival*" was painted in 1811, for Mr John Julius Angerstein. It is on canvas: height, 3 feet 1 inch; width, 4 feet 2 inches.

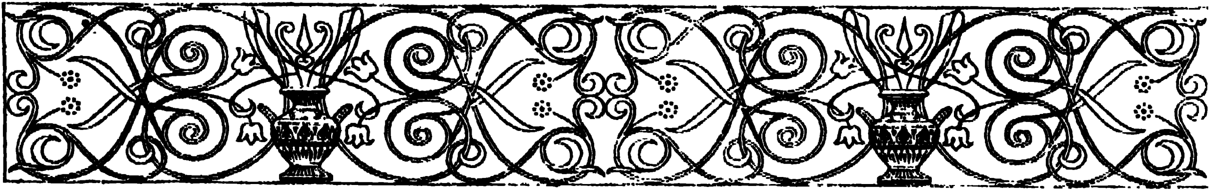


AN ITALIAN SEAPORT: SUNSET.

Claude Lorraine.







AN ITALIAN SEAPORT: SUNSET.

CLAUDE LORRAINE.

CLAUDE LORRAINE, whose almost inimitable landscapes are constantly referred to as a standard of perfection in art, was born at the village of Chamagne, in Lorraine, in the year 1600. His family name was Gellée; but his parentage was obscure, and his own disposition in early life exhibited no traits of those active powers and mental intelligence which have rendered his compositions the admiration of the world. On quitting school, at which his only distinguishing characteristic was a sluggish inaptitude for learning, he was apprenticed to a pastry-cook; but after the death of his parents, he deserted his trade, and walked to Friburg, the residence of his elder brother John, who was an engraver on wood, and who gave him some slight instructions in drawing. He next proceeded to Rome; and being destitute both of friends and money, clownish in his manners, and ignorant of the Italian language, was glad to submit to any drudgery for a livelihood. Whilst thus situated, he became known to Agostino Tassi, an artist of merit, who employed him in the lowest occupations of domestic servitude, as well as to grind his colours and prepare his pallet: afterwards, however, from a desire to render his aid available in the higher branches of the profession, he taught him the elementary principles of perspective and design. Though slow of apprehension, Claude was assiduous; and his awakening talents acquiring energy from observation and diligent practice, he was at length able to assist his master in painting grotesques and arabesques. He then went to Naples, and passed two years with Goffredi Wals, in the study of architecture and landscape. After returning to Rome, and practising there some time, he made the tour of Italy, and travelled through Germany, in his way to his native province. At Nancy he assisted in executing the architecture and perspective of the Carmelite church, and was also employed in similar works at other places; but feeling degraded by this misapplication of his genius, he went back to Rome, and settled, finally, in that city.

Although, as we have seen, Claude had not been destitute of professional instruction, yet Nature herself was his great teacher; and in the open fields, amidst the enchanting scenery, and under the beautiful skies of Italy, he deduced those principles

and formed those rules which governed his practice, and elevated his productions to the highest rank of excellence in the imitative art. From sunrise to "dewy eve" it was his custom to range through the country, watching the effects of light and shade, and making sketches of whatever objects or phenomena met his view, that he conceived would be useful in his future studies.* Atmospheric changes were especially the subjects of his attention; and we are informed by Sandrart, that Claude used to explain to him, as they walked through the fields, the causes of the diversity in appearance of the same prospect at different hours of the day, in respect to colours, from the reflections or refractions of light, and from the evening or morning dews and vapours, with all the precision of a philosopher.

Claude has the undisputed merit of being the inventor of the epic style in landscape-painting; but his knowledge of the human figure was extremely deficient. When in the zenith of his reputation, he had many imitators, to check whose attempted frauds he devised his *Libra di Verita*, wherein he made drawings of his pictures, as an authentic record from which posterity might verify their genuineness. It has been stated that six volumes of this inestimable collection were in existence at the time of his decease: one of them, containing about 200 subjects, now in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire, is supposed to have been brought from Italy by the celebrated Lord Burlington: they were engraved by Earlom, and published in 1774.

Vast prices have been given for the productions of Claude; and in various instances a single picture has produced from one thousand to five and even seven thousand guineas: in fact, when in perfect preservation, his paintings are of almost inestimable value. From his diligent application through a long life, his works became very numerous; and many of them are popularly known from the beautiful engravings of Vivares and Woollet. There are extant also upwards of forty etchings by his own hand, of landscapes, marine subjects, and fireworks. He died in 1682, aged eighty-two years, and was buried in the Church of the Trinità del Monte, at Rome.

This picture of an "*Italian Seaport at Sunset,*" together with its companion ("*Morning*"), was purchased by the late Mr Angerstein, about the year 1800, of Mr Paunnée, for 5000 guineas. It has the date 1644, and is painted on canvas: height, 3 feet 3 inches; width, 4 feet 3 inches.

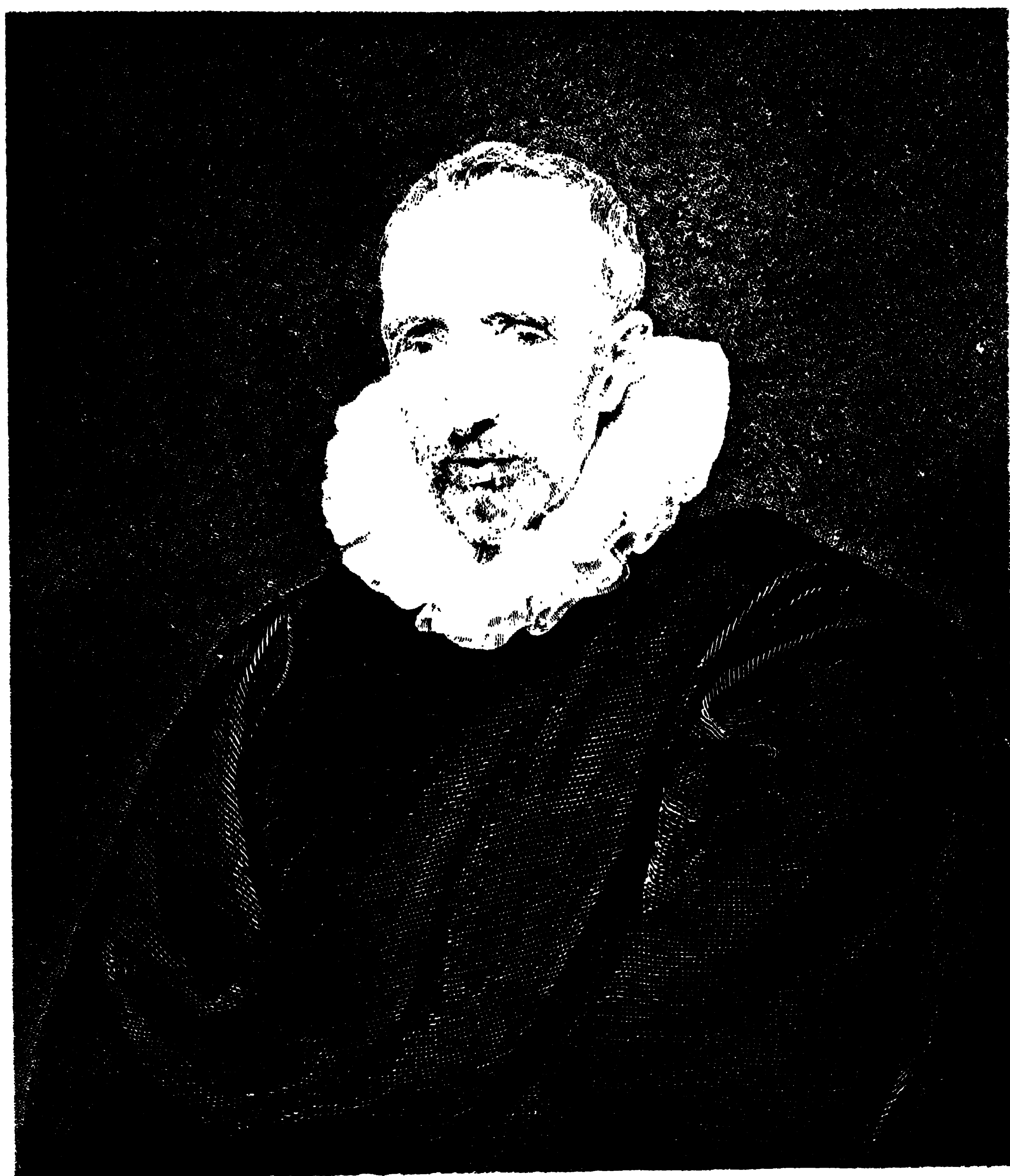
* In the Collection bequeathed to the British Museum by the late Richard Payne Knight, Esq., in 1814, is a book containing 272 original Sketches and Designs by Claude, many of which are authenticated by his own signature. Some of them are highly finished, but others are of a slighter description: of the latter class is a small sketch (4½ inches by 7 inches) in black chalk, slightly shaded, of an entablature on three columns, seen in perspective, with figures beneath, on which is the date "1682" (the last year of his life), and the words, "*libro che eo facto Claudio Gillée,*" written by the artist himself.



THE REPUTED PORTRAIT OF GEVARTIUS.

Sir Anthony Vandyck.







THE REPUTED PORTRAIT OF GEVARTIUS.

SIR ANTHONY VANDYCK.

THIS illustrious artist was born at Antwerp on the 22d of March 1598–99. According to most of his biographers, his father was a merchant, yet others state that he painted on glass. His mother, Cornelia Kersboom, who excelled in embroidery and flower-painting, sent him to a grammar-school, at which he displayed a strong predilection for the arts, and drew sketches with pen and ink. His first instructor was Henry Van Balen; afterwards, he was placed under Rubens, whose assistant he speedily became, and from whose example and precepts he derived that full knowledge of the essentials of painting which has rendered his works so celebrated. Rubens estimated his genius very highly; and advising him to make portraits his chief study, recommended his proceeding to Italy for further experience and improvement. He also gave him a dapple-grey horse, and provided him with money for his journey.

Vandyck, who was then in his twentieth or twenty-first year, had scarcely commenced his travels, when, stopping at Savalthem, a village near Brussels, he became deeply enamoured of a young and beautiful woman. At her request he painted two pictures for the village church; in the first of which, a "*Holy Family*," he represented his mistress in the character of the Virgin; and in the other, "*St Martin dividing his Cloak with the Poor*," delineated the saint under his own likeness, mounted upon the horse which Rubens had given him. When the latter was informed of his scholar's infatuation, he hastened to Savalthem, and by his kind yet earnest remonstrances prevailed on him to renounce his attachment, and proceed to Italy.

Vandyck visited, in succession, Genoa, Venice, Rome, and Palermo, making some stay at each place, and improving his talents both by reflection and practice; the productions of Titian and Paul Veronese being the particular subjects of his study. At Rome, where from his splendid mode of living he was called the *Pittore Cavaliresco*, he executed his noble portrait of Cardinal Bentivoglio: he also painted many estimable pictures at Genoa. On returning to Antwerp, he practised both in portrait and history; but he finally settled in England, having, after one unsuccessful visit, been invited back by Sir Kenelm Digby, at the particular request of Charles the First,

who on his re-arrival presented him with his own portrait set in diamonds, and assigned him a residence at Black-Friars. On the 5th of July 1632, the King conferred on him the honour of knighthood, and in the following year granted him a perpetual annuity of £200. He frequently sat to him for his portrait; and towards the close of his life gave him in marriage the beautiful Maria Ruthven, maid of honour to the Queen, and granddaughter of John, first Earl Gowrie. By this lady he had one child, a daughter, who was baptized at St Anne's, Black-Friars, on the day of his own death.

By great industry, and the extraordinary facility with which he painted, Vandyck obtained a large income; yet his luxurious and expensive style of housekeeping involved him in occasional difficulties; and further losses were incurred by a vain search for the philosopher's stone! At the time of his decease, however, on the 9th of December 1641, he was in affluent circumstances: the gout, acting on a constitution impaired by former excesses, was the immediate cause of his death. He was buried in the old Cathedral of St Paul, near the tomb of John of Gaunt. His productions are extremely numerous: upwards of five hundred of his pictures have been engraved; and many etchings and some finished engravings are also extant, which were executed by his own hand.

Gasper Gevartius, or Gevaerts, who was a learned civilian and town-clerk of Antwerp, had the singular fortune of being commemorated by the pencil both of Vandyck and Rubens; but the engraved portraits bearing his name, and executed from known pictures by those artists, are so essentially different from the reputed "*Gevartius*" now before us, as at once to prove that the latter has been erroneously denominated. It has been said that this picture "was painted for the tomb of Gevartius," a statement obviously incorrect, Vandyck dying in 1641, and Gevartius surviving until 1666. Dallaway, in his edition of Walpole's "Anecdotes," assumes it to be the portrait of *Vander Geist*, "artis pictoriæ amator,"—a point, he continues, "which a comparison of the two heads in the *Centum Icones* will tend to confirm:" yet that comparison, when closely and attentively made, will show that the portraits are by far too unlike to establish such an inference.—This picture was sold at Christie's in 1796 for 230 guineas. In 1798 it was purchased at the sale of Mr Bryan's collection for 340 guineas by Mr Woodhouse, who again sold it to the late Mr Angerstein for 500 guineas. It is painted on wood, and originally included little more than the mere head: its present size is as follows: height, 2 feet 7 inches; width, 2 feet 2 inches.



EVENING; A COMPOSITION.

Albert Cüyp, or Küyp.







EVENING; A COMPOSITION.

ALBERT CÜYP, OR KÜYP.

ALBERT CÜYP was born at Dort, in North Holland, in the year 1606. He was the eldest son of Jacques Gerritze Cüyp, an artist of considerable merit, who had studied under Abraham Bloemart, and is celebrated for his landscapes and battle-pieces, and also from being one of the founders of the Academy for Painting, at Dort, in 1642. But the pictorial reputation of *Old Cüyp* (as the father is usually styled) is far exceeded by that of Albert, his son and pupil, whose landscapes, though frequently composed of the simplest objects in Nature, embody in their execution the highest principles of the art. Nothing remarkable has been recorded either of his manner of study or habits of living, nor are we aware that he ever travelled beyond the precincts of his own country. Although in many of his productions there is a general air of locality and sameness, they are always executed with an exquisite tone of colour, a light and discriminative touch, and a breadth and harmony of surpassing excellence. From his taste and talents the Dutch School attained a renown which it had never before reached. His representations of natural scenery and objects, though identically true, are so combined and harmonised by the mellow sweetness of his aerial tints, that all obtrusive individuality merges into the broad and rich effects which characterise his pencil. "His eye," says Mr Bryan, "attuned to the harmony of colour, like the ear of the musician to sound, appears to have been incapable of a discordant tone; and every object is enveloped in the air of the moment he wished to describe."

Cüyp's genius was extremely fertile: his sea-pieces and river-views are executed with similar excellence to his landscapes and cattle; but among the most surprising of his works are his frost-pieces, with figures amusing themselves on the ice. These are treated with consummate skill; and the extraordinary effect he has given to that gilded glare which Nature not unfrequently assumes in the winter season, particularly in Holland, is perhaps indescribable. His moonlights, from possessing a superior and more delicate gradation of light, are reputed to eclipse the admired works of Vanderneer; and his horse-fairs and skirmishes of cavalry are delineated with infinite spirit. According to Pilkington, his most capital performance is a representation of the Cattle-

market at Dort, and the square wherein the troops exercise, in which the horses that appear on the parade are painted with such a perfect accuracy that they might be as distinctly known in the picture as in their evolutions. Like Claude, this artist was an acute observer of atmospheric changes, and of every vicissitude of light and shadow: in the management and truth of his aerial tints he has probably never been surpassed. Morning, with its dewy vapours ushering in the brightness of a summer day, the glittering heat of noon, and the saffron-coloured glow, yet still radiance of evening, with the pure and silvery light of the pale moon, emerging from the horizon or rising high in the fields of ether, are all delineated in his landscapes with exact fidelity and verisimilitude. His studies were entirely after Nature; and his compositions, though generally based upon the homely scenery about the city of Dort, display a fine choice, and a power of combination which few possess.

The finest as well as the greatest number of Cüyp's pictures are in this country; and it is acknowledged that the correct judgment, and ardour to possess his works, of the English collectors, first brought them into the reputation they now possess even in his native land. This fact alone is demonstrative of the advancement of public taste among ourselves, although we are as yet far removed from that meridian splendour which must ultimately irradiate every path of British art. Albert Cüyp had a younger brother, named Benjamin, who adopted the same profession, and though not his equal in abilities, was a very respectable artist: his general style was an imitation of Rembrandt, and particularly in his small historical pieces.

This picture of "*Evening*" was obtained from the Collection of Sir Lawrence Dundas. It is painted on canvas: the height is 4 feet 4 inches, and the length 6 feet 6 inches.

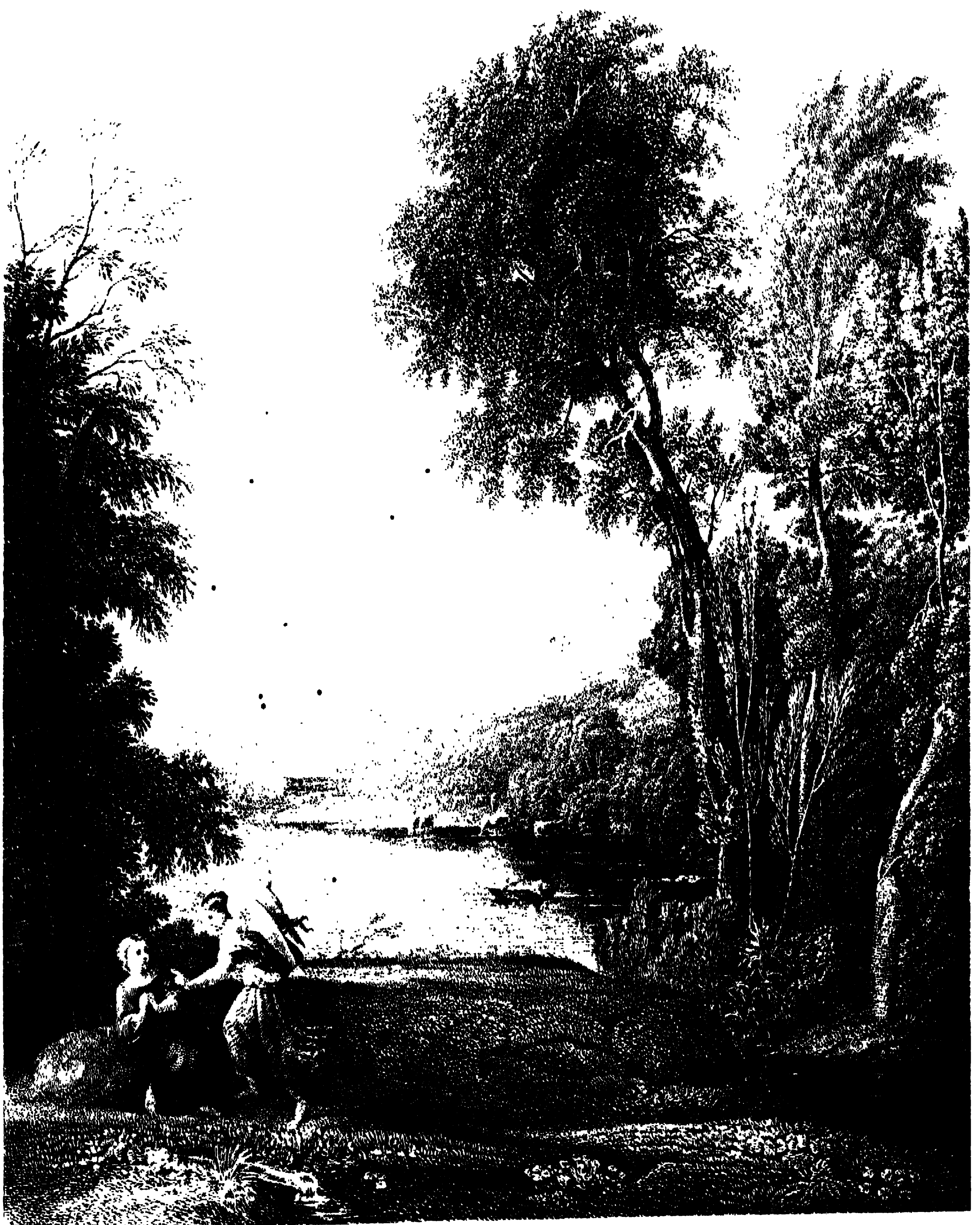


A LANDSCAPE, WITH FIGURES;

SAID TO REPRESENT THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE VIRGIN, BUT CONSIDERED TO BE THE APPEARANCE OF THE ANGEL TO HAGAR.

Claude Lorraine.







A LANDSCAPE, WITH FIGURES;

SAID TO REPRESENT THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE VIRGIN, BUT SIDERED TO BE THE APPEARANCE OF THE ANGEL TO HAGAR

CLAUDE LORRAINE.



HAT Nature, in the peculiar organisation of individuals, gives a tendency to particular pursuits, is forcibly illustrated by the biography of CLAUDE LORRAINE; to the account of whom, as narrated in a former article, some additions will now be made. His mental faculties were altogether unadapted to scholastic studies; and Pierre Gellée, his father, is stated to have frequently complained that Claude was so naturally imbecile that he could never be taught either to make a fire or heat an oven! His talents, indeed, were extremely slow in their development; and it was not until after he had been long in the service of Agostino Tassi, at Rome, and had attained his thirty-sixth year, that he gave any successful indications of those extraordinary powers which have placed him at the head of his class: yet, within ten years afterwards, he became the admitted friend of the illustrious Cardinal Bentivoglio, the distinguished favourite of Pope Urban VIII., and the courted guest of nobility, and official rank and affluence.

Claude, Salvator Rosa, and Gaspar Poussin were contemporaries during the pontificate of Urban the Eighth;* and that specious kind of patronage which, without sufficient judgment, aspires to give a tone to the fine arts, alternately exalted them above each other. But posterity, in awarding due justice to the talents of all, has admitted that the compositions of Claude are the richest and the most studied; whilst, in the boundless expanses of scenery which they exhibit, they are above every comparison. "His landscapes," says Lanzi, "present such an endless variety of interesting objects, so many views of land and water, that the eye is obliged to pause to measure the extent of the prospect; and his distances of mountains, or of sea, are so illusory,

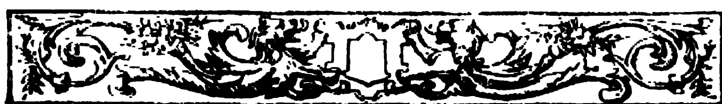
* Claude, Salvator, and Nicholas Poussin resided near each other, on the beautiful *Monte Pincio*, at Rome: the splendid mansion of Salvator was situated between the houses of Claude and Poussin, on the *Piazza della Trinità del Monte.*

that the beholder feels, as it were, fatigued by gazing. The edifices and temples, which so appropriately embellish his compositions; the lakes, teeming with aquatic birds; the foliages, diversified in accordance with the various species of trees, are alike true to Nature. Every object arrests the attention of the amateur, and furnishes instruction to the professor; but particularly when he painted with care, as in the pictures of Altieri, Colonna, and other palaces at Rome. There is not an effect of light, nor a reflection in the water, nor in the sky itself, which he has not imitated; and, in a word, Claude is truly the artist who, in depicting the three regions of air, earth, and water, has comprehended the whole universe."

Claude's marine views and magnificent seaports bear the impress of the same inimitable powers which distinguish his landscapes; especially "in the purity and freshness of the air, and the gently undulating swell of the water, sparkling with the lucid reflection of a clear and brilliant sunshine. In his pictures of morning, the rising sun dissipates the dews, and the fields and verdure brighten at the approach of day; his evening skies expand a glowing splendour over the horizon; vegetation, oppressed by a sultry aridity, sinks under the burning heat of the sun." "It is thus," continues Mr Bryan, "that Claude, with an unexampled felicity, represents the vicissitudes of air and atmosphere, in which he may be said to dispute the veracity with Nature herself."

The very beautiful picture now engraved formed one of the valuable Collection presented to the Nation by the late Sir George Beaumont, Bart., who was himself so highly impressed by a sense of its merits that he scarcely ever removed from home without making it the companion of his journey.[1] This attachment was so strong, and he felt so acutely the loss of his little favourite, that even after it had been placed in the Gallery, he wrote to the Lords of his Majesty's Treasury requesting it as a loan. His application was acceded to, and the picture remained in Sir George's possession until his decease, after which it was returned to the Gallery by Lady Beaumont. This gem of art had been previously in the Collection of Mr Duane. It is executed in the artist's most finished manner, and is in the highest preservation.

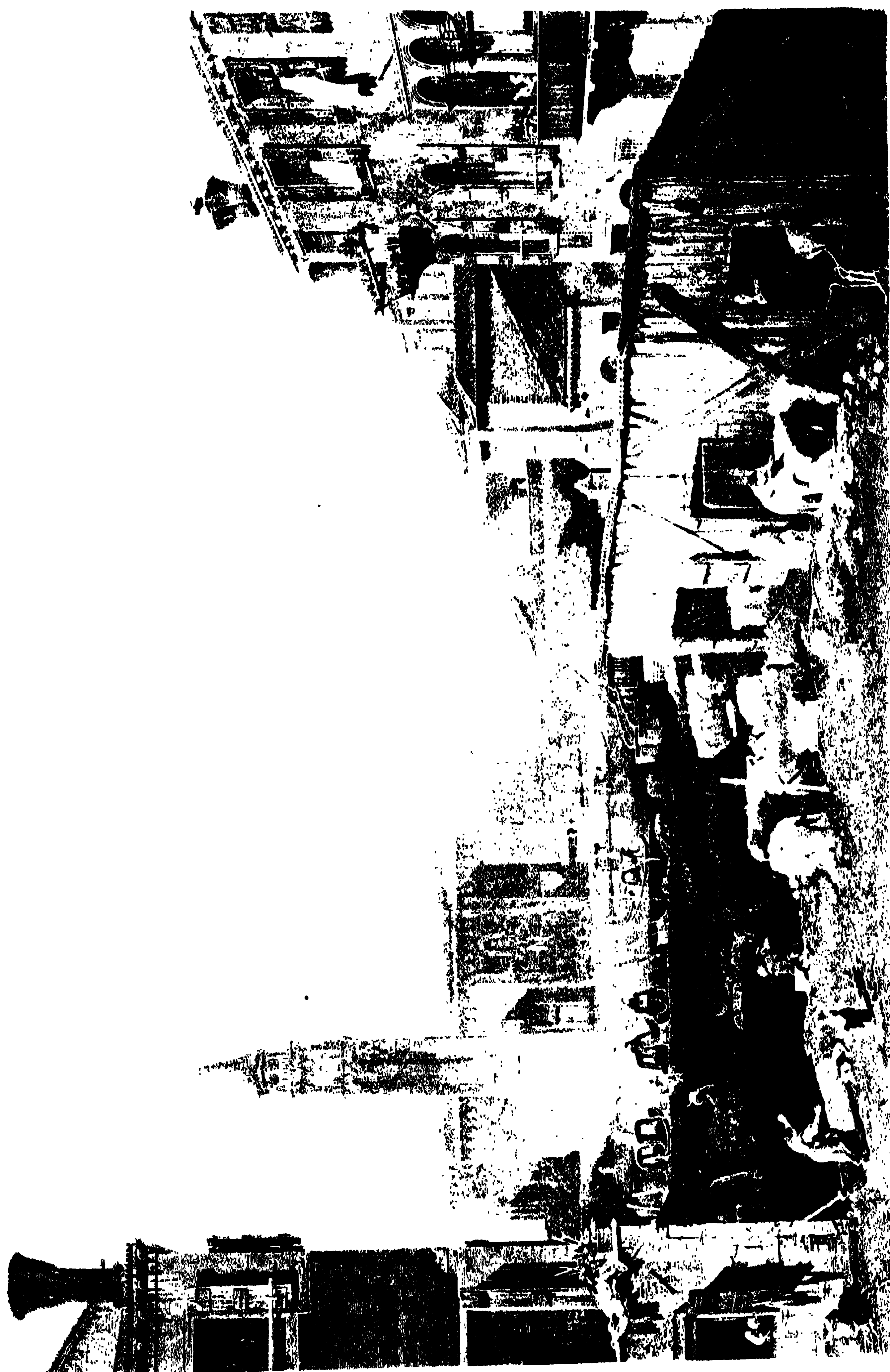
[1] This picture is painted on canvas: its height is 1 foot 8 inches; its width 1 foot 4½ inches.

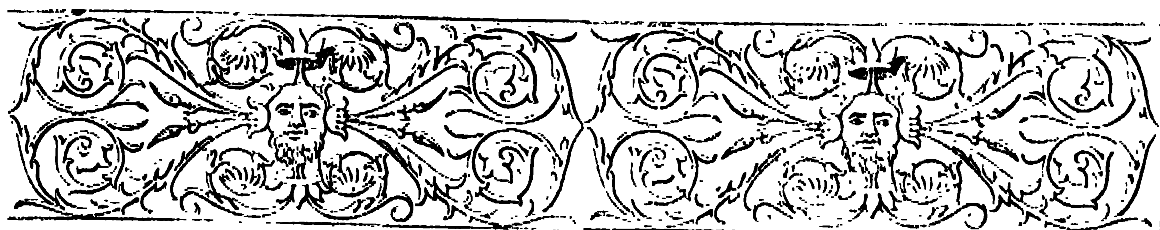


A VIEW IN VENICE.

Antonio Canaletti.







A VIEW IN VENICE.

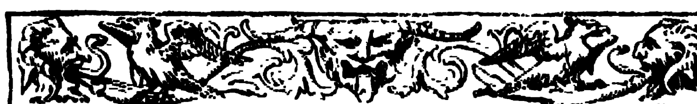
ANTONIO CANALETTI.

CANALETTI, or CANALETTO, for he used both designations, was born at Venice in the year 1697. He was the son of Bernardo Canal, a scene-painter; and by early practice in the same profession, acquired a facility of design and a promptness of execution which greatly contributed to his success in adult years. Aspiring, however, to a more lofty range of art than that of mere theatrical decoration, he went to Rome whilst still young, where he assiduously engaged in the study and delineation of champaign scenery in connection with the august ruins of the ancient Capitol. On returning to Venice, he employed his matured pencil in representing the peculiar localities of that remarkable city—scenes which nature and art have combined to render the most novel and the most magnificent in Europe. Many of his paintings exhibit the spots they represent with extreme exactitude, and are therefore highly interesting to all who have not had their curiosity gratified by beholding the metropolis of the Adriatic; but in others, the artist has exercised his taste and inventive powers in combining the modern with the antique, the real with the imaginary. Of this latter class, he produced several estimable pieces for Algarotti; the most original and instructive of which compositions, according to Lanzi, is a "*View of the Great Canal*," wherein, instead of the present bridge, he has introduced the Rialto, of Palladio, with the Cathedral of Vicenza rising in the centre, and the Palazzo Chericato (Palladio's own works), and other select edifices, terminating the extremities of the picture.

Whilst thus employed, his increasing fame attracted the notice of Mr Joseph Smith, the English Resident, or Consul, at Venice, who engaged him to paint, at low prices, for a term of years; but in the meantime selling his productions to travellers at a considerable profit. Canaletti at length becoming aware of this injustice, and persuaded by his countryman Jacopo Amiconi, resolved to visit England, which he accordingly did in the year 1746. During his stay he executed a variety of views on the river Thames, and in other parts of London, two of which are at Goodwood, in Sussex, and others are in the Royal Collection at Windsor. The denseness of the English atmosphere, which he imitated, was not congenial with the practice of one

accustomed to the glowing brilliancy of Italian skies, and after a residence in this country of about two years, he returned to his native land. Still pursuing his labours until he attained the advanced age of seventy, and being assisted by several skilful pupils (of whom Francesco Guardo, and his own nephew, Bernardo Bellotti, are the most eminent), his paintings are exceedingly numerous. They are mostly executed with great vigour and boldness of handling, combined with strict lineal precision and a fine tone of colour. To insure fidelity of representation in his architectural perspectives, he employed the Camera, but carefully corrected its defects, especially in the linear aberrations and air-tints: in this respect he is regarded as the first who discovered to artists its effective use and real powers. Like Tiepoli, who occasionally assisted in introducing figures into his pieces, he aimed at striking effects; and his productions, generally speaking, possess a peculiar breadth and brilliancy, which essentially distinguish them from the works of others of his grade; for he had numerous imitators, and there are many views extant, bearing his name, which he never executed. His choice was good, and his knowledge of the principles of his art enabled him to take pictorial liberties without impairing his accuracy. He died in the year 1768, aged seventy-one.

The picture before us is painted on canvas: its height is 4 feet, and its length 5 feet 4 inches. Many of Canaletti's finest productions are in this country; and among those of the first degree of eminence is a "*View in Venice*," in the Collection of Sir John Soane.

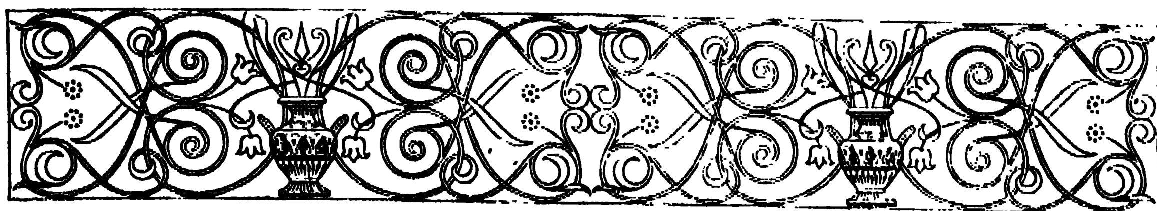


PORTRAIT OF SIR PETER PAUL RUBENS

Sir Anthony Vandyck.







PORTRAIT OF SIR PETER PAUL RUBENS.

SIR ANTHONY VANDYCK.

RUBENS and VANDYCK, like twin stars irradiating the realms of art, are inseparably associated in our recollections; although, when their respective talents are duly estimated, the palm of superior excellence must unquestionably be awarded to Rubens. Both were animated by genius of the first order; but the pencil of the master took a bolder flight, and was more universal in its application and practice, than that of the disciple. If Vandyck exceeded Rubens in his style of design, as affirmed by Barry, and equalled him in richness of colouring, as asserted by De Piles, he was surpassed by the latter in the qualities of invention, composition, and execution. These advantages, perhaps, without referring to a more recondite process of inquiry, may be chiefly attributed to the superior intellectual cultivation which it had been the good fortune of Rubens to receive when young, his studies having been directed with the most assiduous care.

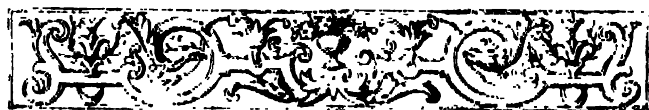
There is an anecdote related of Vandyck, which strongly marks his early proficiency as an artist, as well as the high opinion entertained of his abilities by his fellow-students. It was the custom of Rubens, as a relaxation from the labours of the day, to ride out on horseback, leaving the key of his painting-room with a confidential servant. That person, however, being prevailed on by frequent presents, allowed the pupils of Rubens secretly to inspect his works, for the purpose of ascertaining his modes of handling and practice. On one occasion, whilst he was engaged on his celebrated picture of "*The Descent from the Cross*," the students were thus admitted, and on pressing eagerly forward, Diepenbeck was pushed against the painting, and in falling, he partly effaced the head of the Virgin, and the arm of the Magdalen, which had just been finished. In the consternation which ensued, and under the dread of their master's displeasure, it was suggested that Vandyck, as the ablest amongst them, and as there were yet three hours of daylight, should endeavour to repair the damage. Though despairing of success, Vandyck undertook the task, and he executed it so happily, that when Rubens entered his painting-room on the following morning, accompanied by his scholars, he observed, in pointing to the restored parts, "There is a head and an arm, which are by no means the worst of what I did yesterday;" and although, on a

nearer approach, he discovered the change, and was informed of the accident, he was so satisfied with Vandyck's work that he suffered it to remain unaltered.

D'Argenville and others have stated that it was from this circumstance, and from a growing jealousy of his opening talents, that Rubens advised his disciple to renounce historical painting, and attach himself to portrait: yet there is no valid foundation for the calumny; but, on the contrary, every reason to believe that the advice given proceeded from the most disinterested friendship. In fact, it was not from any particular admonition that Vandyck was eventually induced to abandon history, but it arose from the greater profits and the superior celebrity which he obtained by painting portraits. The historical pictures which he executed are very numerous; and Descamps gives a particular account of seventy-seven pieces of this description, in various churches and public edifices, which he painted after quitting the school of Rubens.

The Portrait of Rubens, now engraved, was bought by Mr Angerstein, at the sale of the pictures of Sir Joshua Reynolds in 1795, for the sum of 140 guineas. At the conclusion of the sale, Mr Burke congratulated the purchaser on his having thus obtained a piece which Sir Joshua, when often expatiating on its merits, had termed "his favourite picture." In his "Journey to Flanders and Holland," Sir Joshua also, speaking of this Portrait (which was then in his own possession), in conjunction with other pictures by Vandyck, says, "They were done when he was very young: he never afterwards had so brilliant a manner of colouring; it kills everything near it." "This," he continues, "is Vandyck's first manner, when he imitated Rubens and Titian, which supposes the sun in the room; in his pictures afterwards, he represented common daylight. Both were equally true to nature; but his first manner carries a superiority with it, and seizes our attention, whilst pictures painted in the latter manner run a risk of being overlooked."

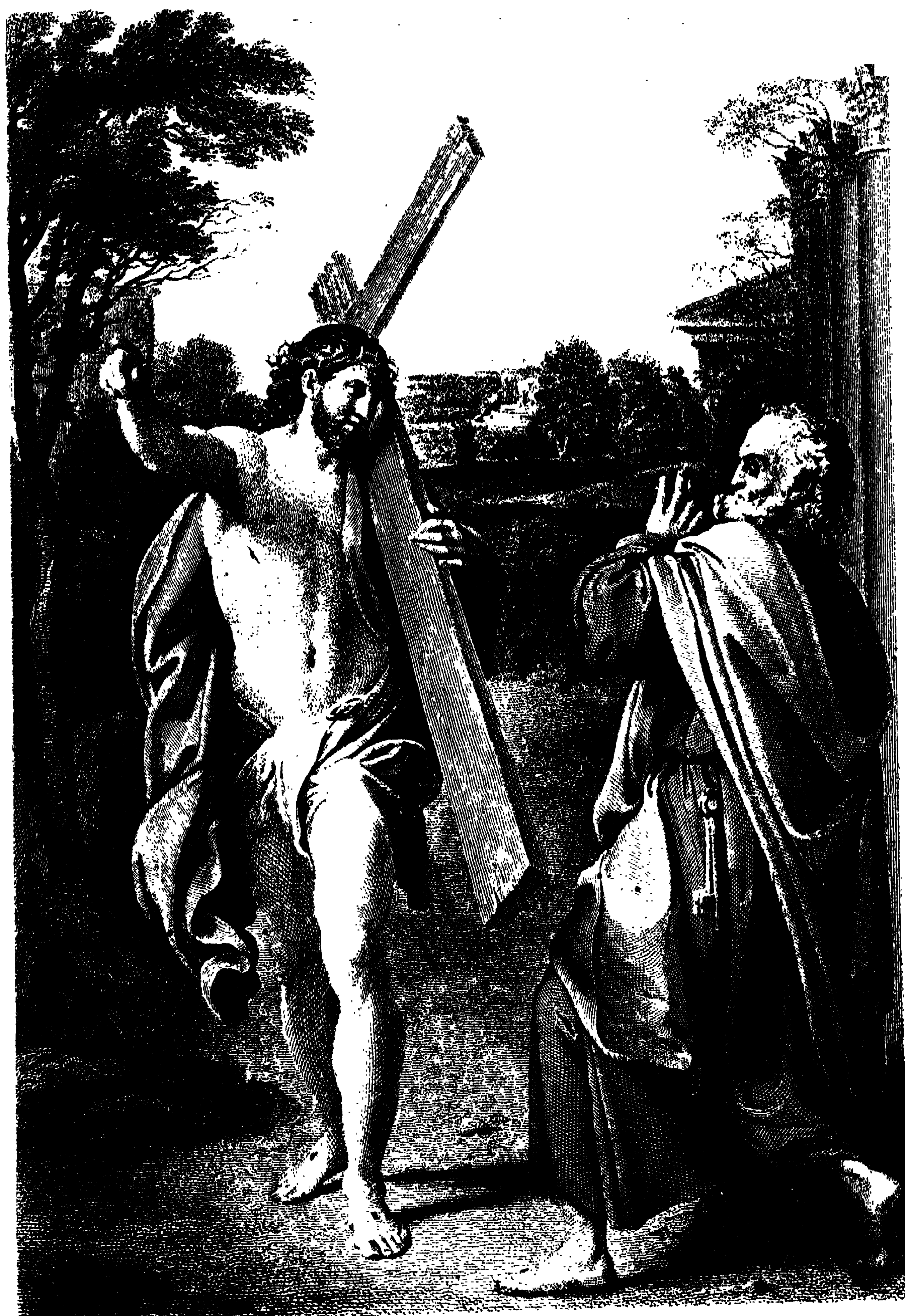
This is a square picture on canvas: height and width, 3 feet 9 inches.



THE APPEARANCE OF CHRIST TO ST PETER.

Annibale Caracci.







THE APPEARANCE OF CHRIST TO ST PETER.

ANNIBALE CARACCI.

ANNIBALE CARACCI (one of the most renowned painters of the Bolognese school) was born at Bologna in the year 1560. He was younger brother to Agostino, and cousin to Ludovico Caracci. The son of a poor tailor, and himself a labourer in a trade which is akin to anything but the heroic, it betrayed no indifferent genius to surmount the impediments of his condition, and render himself conspicuous in a liberal art. Yet he succeeded in doing this, spurred on by a temperament at once persevering and sanguine, and materially influenced (and, it must be confessed, assisted) by the superior and judicious mind of his cousin Ludovico.

Whatever eminence the school of Bologna attained, was, beyond a doubt, primarily owing to Ludovico, the eldest and most accomplished of the Caraccis. It was he who took his cousins from the shops of the tailor and the goldsmith; educated them in art; and founded and (almost within his own person and family) brought to perfection the last of the great schools of painting in Italy. He was, perhaps, the most philosophical of painters; and, whatever course he might have pursued, must at all events have become eminent. Annibale and Agostino were his pupils, illustrious ones it is true, but deriving all their science, and much of their character, as painters, from his tuition and example.

In the boldness and dexterity of his pencil, Annibale Caracci outstripped his master, and rivalled the most powerful draftsmen of the Roman and Florentine schools. Michael Angelo himself scarcely surpassed him in this particular. But he failed in some of the higher qualities of art: in invention, as is supposed by many; and in expression, as is allowed by all. Yet there are heads extant by his hand—chance portraits of individuals, generally of humble condition—which for truth, vigour, and even expression, may challenge competition with anything in art. It was mainly in the ideal that he failed. His imagination was defective, but his eye was correct. Instead of attempting, therefore, to illustrate the stories of gods and heroes, it would have been well, perhaps, had he contented himself with transcribing nature with vigorous fidelity. There are some noble productions of this artist which stand up in defiance of this seemingly harsh criticism; but these are exceptions to the general character of his genius, and are not sufficient in number or merit to falsify it altogether.

The present picture, to a certain extent, confirms the foregoing opinion. It is a masterpiece of academic skill. The landscape is agreeable (Annibale was a fine painter of landscape); the figure of Christ is admirably developed and foreshortened; the light is thrown effectively upon the figure: but here the encomium ends. The countenance of the Saviour is deficient in dignity and expression; and the figure of St Peter, singly, might easily have been ascribed to an artist inferior to the Caraccis, without any impeachment of the critic's judgment.

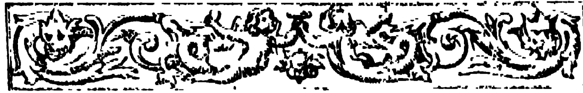
Annibale Caracci acquired the rudiments of art, as before mentioned, under his cousin Ludovico. It was at Ludovico's instigation that he afterwards visited Parma; where he pondered on and made copies from Correggio, whose grand and imposing effects he caught with marvellous success. He then studied the colouring of Titian and other Venetian painters; and finally completed his education at Rome, in the presence of the great works of Michael Angelo and Raffaelle. He died in the year 1609, when he was forty-nine years old.

The largest (if not the best) work of Annibale Caracci was "*The Farnese Gallery*," where he consumed eight valuable years of his life, and for which he received the wages of a servant. His employer was the Cardinal Farnese—a prince, with the spirit of a mendicant—a churchman, whose sole claim to be not forgotten arises from the enduring contempt which is felt towards his memory by all classes of men, and which still continues to immortalise this act of ignoble dishonesty towards a man a hundred times superior to himself.

Annibale was but slenderly acquainted with literature of any sort; and to this may probably be ascribed his want of invention in painting. He dealt with subjects that he did not completely understand. He had scanned the outline, but had not penetrated the spirit of the fictions and histories which he attempted to illustrate with his pencil. This has been the error of artists in all times. They have painted but too often little more than indifferent parodies. They have not individualised the gods, the nymphs, and the heroes of old; because they have never understood them. In this estimate must be excepted, of course, some of the greater names in ancient art; and to the professors of modern painting these strictures have no allusion.

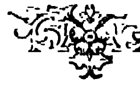
The present picture was brought from the Borghese Palace, at Rome, where it hung formerly in the room of the Prince Aldobrandini.

It is painted on wood. Its height is 2 feet 6 inches, and its width 1 foot 10 inches.



THE PORTRAIT OF A JEW MERCHANT.

Rembrandt.







THE PORTRAIT OF A JEW MERCHANT.

REMBRANDT.

IF a doubt had ever existed as to whether Rembrandt was or was not a great artist, the question might be said to have been set at rest by the present picture. Without entering into any detailed criticism on its merits (a thing which it is an object in this work to avoid), it may be asserted that there is one quality in the portrait of "*The Jew Merchant*" which, above all others, is significant of the hand of a master. The picture, indeed, fine as it is, is not perhaps one of the very finest of Rembrandt's works; but (independently of its chiaroscuro and colour) it exhibits simplicity and nature in the highest degree. It is the perfection of ease. There is no studied elegance nor academic display; no forced expression, nor ostentatious development of the figure; but all is simple, tranquil, and unaffected. And there results from this mere imitation of nature, a peculiar and positive grace. In this respect, indeed, it cannot be too much commended.

There are few subjects that would repay the careful study of an artist better than this painting. Unlike as it is in many points, it may nevertheless be placed, without presumption, by the side of the portrait of "*Julius the Second*," in this Collection. It is a work of the same order; exhibiting the same determination to paint the unsophisticated truth; and arriving at the same eminence by the same simple means. "Most painters," observes an acute critic, speaking of Raffaelle, "puzzle themselves to find out what will be picturesque, and what will be fine, and never discover it. Raffaelle thought only how a person would stand or fall naturally, in such or such circumstances; and the picturesque and the fine followed, as matters of course. Hence the unaffected force and dignity of his style, which are only another name for truth and nature under impressive and momentous circumstances." If the same cannot always be said of Rembrandt, it may at all events be said of him in reference to the present picture.

Rembrandt and Rubens were the *Dii Majores* of Flemish art. Each had his school or line of imitators; the last, indeed, possessed a scholar (Vandyck) who approached himself in the mechanical excellence of his works. But *there* the proximity ceases. There remains always the distance—the interval that can never be overstepped—between the originator and the copyist, between the leader and the follower in art.

Rembrandt had a host of imitators; but not one of them has attained a great reputation. His style—dark, dazzling, gorgeous, and awful (as the case seemed to require), and to the last degree ambitious of effect—naturally provoked imitation. But it was found easier to catch his general tones, his light and shade, &c., than to compete with him in his admirable reflection of nature, in his expression and invention, and in those grand and wonderful effects in which he surpassed all other painters.

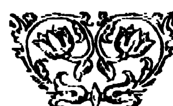
There are pictures of great merit by this eminent artist, in this country; at Blenheim, at Burleigh, at Lord Grosvenor's; and in the Dulwich and National Collections. In the last there is the "*Woman Bathing*" (where the flesh is marvellously coloured); a "*Jacob and Esau*" at Blenheim; "*The Man and Hawk,*" at Lord Grosvenor's; and finally that strange effort of the imagination, called "*Jacob's Dream,*" in the Dulwich Gallery. As a mere painting, this last-mentioned picture is inferior to many of Rembrandt's works; but in point of absolute invention and originality—in its strange poetical spirit—with its subdued light, like the coming dawn, and its never-to-be-forgotten angels, or rather "those winged shapes, not human nor angelical, but bird-like, dreamlike, treading on clouds, ascending, descending, through the realms of endless light"—it is surely one of the most imposing and extraordinary things within the whole circle of art. It is like a phantasma that has had its origin in a poet's dream.

The present picture was presented to the National Gallery by Sir George Beaumont. It is painted on canvas. Its height is 4 feet 6 inches, and its width 3 feet 4 inches.

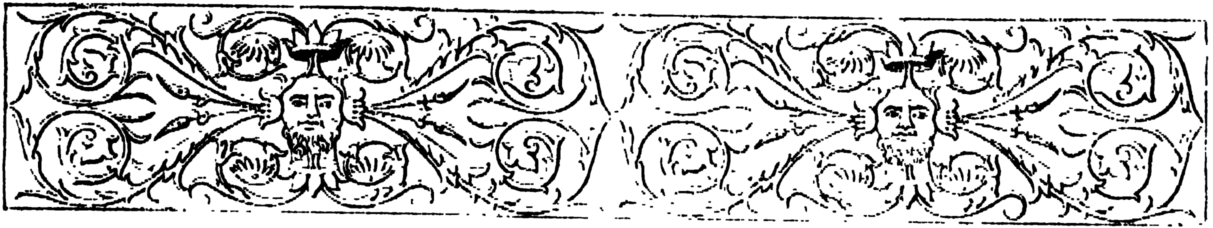


THE RAPE OF THE SABINES.

Rubens.







THE RAPE OF THE SABINES.

RUBENS.

PETER PAUL RUBENS was born on the feast of St. Peter and St. Paul, 1577, in the city of Cologne, where his father (one of the principal magistrates of Antwerp) had then taken refuge, during the war which raged in the Low Countries. On the return of his family to Antwerp, he was educated in a manner becoming his station; and he requited the care thus bestowed upon him by exhibiting early manifestations of excellence, together with more docility of temper than is ordinarily supposed to accompany genius.

On the death of his father, which happened about the time when Rubens completed his studies, he decided on painting as a profession; and he was accordingly placed under the tuition of Verhaecht. Afterwards, he became a pupil of Adam Van Oort, an artist of some credit in historic painting; and finally of Otho Venius, for whose good qualities and talents he appears to have entertained the most sincere affection and respect. At the age of twenty-three, Rubens, who had already rivalled his instructor, set out by his advice for Italy; passing through Venice, in order to examine the works of the great colourists there, but having his ultimate destination at Mantua; to which place he carried strong recommendations, addressed to the Duke Vincenzio Gonzaga, from the Archduke Albert, at that time Governor of the Netherlands. The Palazzo del T. was then (as it still is) the principal point of attraction at Mantua. It is the triumph of Giulio Romano's genius. He was architect as well as painter; although the merits of the building are lost in the superlative excellence of the pictures with which he enriched it. These (consisting of the beautiful Fable of Psyche, and the Fall of the Giants, — the latter touched with so powerful a pencil as to dare comparison with Michael Angelo) became naturally the objects of Rubens's study and emulation. It seems, indeed, as though one might refer many of the brawny limbs and Herculean proportions of Rubens to his admiration for the gigantic figures of Giulio. The sympathy of the Fleming, however, was mainly for the great masters of colour; and he accordingly obtained permission from the Duke of Mantua (under whose patronage he now wrought) to visit Venice again.

There is little doubt but that it was by a close study of the Venetian masters that

Rubens acquired his ideas of colour. In his pictures he approaches nearer to Paolo Veronese than to Titian or Giorgione; and nearer to the last-mentioned artist than to Tintoret; but he is essentially different from all. He possessed decided originality, as well as genius. If he imitated (and what artist is there who has not done so, in some degree?) there is so complete a combination and fusion of other styles into one, as to leave no trace of any individual model. We can no more, generally speaking, mistake the dash and glow of Rubens for the splendour of Paolo Veronese, than for the serious grandeur of Titian himself. Like the latter, indeed, he was a fine painter of landscape; and if these two great masters approximated in anything, it was in this particular. But, notwithstanding these things, Rubens was the originator of a school, in the proper sense of the word; and he was the greatest in it, as well as the first.

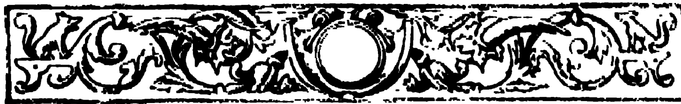
After Rubens's return from Venice, he proceeded to Rome, where he made copies of some of the more celebrated works there, for his patron; and he was afterwards, in 1605, selected by the Duke of Mantua as envoy to the Court of Madrid, at which place he was received with great respect in his double quality of ambassador, and painter. It appears that he accomplished the object of his embassy—that he returned to Mantua—travelled once more to Rome—visited Genoa—was employed in many considerable works—and so went on, adding gradually to his fame. The illness of his mother, however, recalled him (after an absence of eight years) to his home. She died before his arrival; and Rubens was once more about to return to Italy, when the persuasions of the Archduke Albert and his wife induced him to remain and settle at Antwerp.

Here, surrounded by every comfort, and in fact not without magnificence, he continued to pursue his art; adorning the public edifices with his genius, and running the course of fame without an equal. Rubens was not indeed without his enemies. His urbanity and generous spirit were not sufficient to repress envy; and his success naturally provoked dislike in mean minds, who assailed him with ineffectual calumnies, which only added to the splendour of his triumph. He appears to have felt how insignificant was this contemporary slander; for it is said not to have affected him otherwise than by exciting his benevolence and charity towards his enemies, or by stimulating him to some brilliant achievement in art. His mind was never stationary. It is recorded, that during the times when he was employed in painting, he engaged some one to read to him various portions of history or poetry; and that he did not disdain, in mature life, to cultivate the more elegant occupations of his youth.

In 1620 he executed his great and well-known work of the Luxembourg Gallery, at the request of Mary de Medicis. In 1628, he went once more on a diplomatic mission to Spain, where (not wholly engrossed by politics) he ornamented with four magnificent pictures a convent of the Carmelites near Madrid; and in 1629 he was in England (again as a diplomatist), where he painted the ceiling of the Banqueting-house at Whitehall. For his conduct at London and Madrid, he received successively the distinction of knighthood from the King of Spain and Charles the First of England.

When his embassy to the British Court was accomplished, Rubens returned finally to the Netherlands, and died, at Antwerp, full of honours, in the year 1640.

The present picture formed one of the Angerstein Collection. It is 7 feet 9 inches long, and 5 feet 6 inches high.

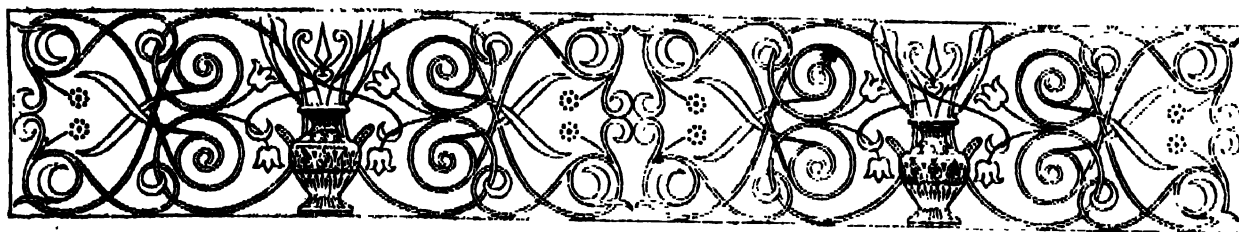


THE VILLA OF MÆCENAS AT TIVOLI.

Richard Wilson.







THE VILLA OF MÆCENAS AT TIVOLI.

RICHARD WILSON.

RICHARD WILSON (the son of a clergyman possessing a small benefice in Monmouthshire) was born some time in the year 1714. Having determined on painting as a profession, he was placed with a portrait-painter of the name of Wright, who resided in London. It is said that he applied himself to this branch of art with considerable success; but the proofs of his advancement are wanting. There is no picture by Wilson, either of his early or later time, which has been brought forward to substantiate this assertion.

It must have been shortly after the year 1750 that he went to Italy, and finally settled at Rome. Here he seems to have continued to paint portraits as a general pursuit. But deviating occasionally into landscape, one of his pictures of this kind came under the notice of Zuccharelli, who immediately counselled him to abandon his former course, and adopt landscape-painting. Wilson took the advice thus offered, and began to paint landscape accordingly. That he made an unusually rapid progress, is evident; for at the very commencement of this part of his career he interchanged pictures with Mengs, and also with Vernet (then in high reputation at Rome), and had, moreover, several pupils in his newly adopted line of art. In 1758 he had returned to London; and in 1760 he added vastly to his already rising reputation, by sending his picture of Niobe to the first exhibition that took place under the direction of the Society of British Artists.

Various stories are told of the quarrels and jealousies which arose from time to time between Wilson and his brother painters. But these may as well be passed over, since the individuals to whom they relate are beyond the power both of advice and slander; neither is Wilson here to undergo an examination as to how much or how little of the cause of quarrel originated with himself. All that is certain is, that he lived in discomfort, and died in poverty. He was neglected, and ill requited; and he seems to have suffered his fair proportion of hostility and envy. A temper which appears to have been indifferent, embittered much of his life; and his sanguine temperament and ardent imagination, encountering disappointment at every turn, aggravated beyond a doubt the miseries of his already forlorn condition. On the institution

of the Royal Academy, however, he was elected one of its members; and on the death of Hayman the artist, he obtained the post of librarian, which he held till sickness drove him to his brother's house in Wales, where he died in May 1782, at the age of sixty-eight years.

Comparisons have been instituted between Wilson and Claude, and between Wilson and Gainsborough. Nothing can be more unprofitable than these idle and always offensive comparisons. They generate envy and pain, without producing any equivalent good. And, after all, a man's fame must be determined by his own *positive* merit; not by the relation which it bears to the merits or demerits of others. Moreover, there are no two painters sufficiently alike to enable a critic to draw a parallel that is in all respects strictly just. It ought surely to be sufficient that an artist has painted well. Wilson has done this. The quality of his pictures, scattered over this country, puts the matter beyond a question. He was clearly a painter of considerable genius and imagination: and he elevated the character of English art. For this, let honour be awarded to him; for this, let his faults be forgotten. All that he failed in was matter merely personal, and these errors he paid for with an unhappy life.

The present picture was painted at Rome about the year 1753, for the then Earl of Thanet. It is said that he one day went to Tivoli with Lord North and Wilson, and being struck with the beauty of the scene, commissioned the artist to paint it for him; suggesting, at the same time, the introduction of the fountain in the foreground. This object is, in fact, the Bandusian fountain of Horace, so well known by the ode,

"O fons Bandusiæ, splendidior vitro," &c.

of which the reader may accept the following as a paraphrase:—

O thou Bandusian fountain—bright as a star—
Brighter than glass—worthy our flower-crowned wine!
To-morrow (threatening love, in vain, and war)—
To-morrow shall a budding kid be thine!
To-morrow, with his young and scarlet blood,
We'll warm the coolness of thy sparkling flood.

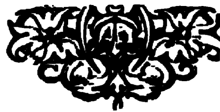
The Dog-star, in his hot and savage hour,
Touches not *thee*, thou cool Bandusian stream;
But wandering flocks (cropping nor herb nor flower),
And the tired ox, beside thee come to dream.
Sweet fountain! I will make thee known through time,
Crowning thine oaks and rills with MY Eternal Rhyme!

This picture was presented to the National Gallery by Sir George Beaumont. It is painted on canvas. Its length is 5 feet 6 inches, and its height 3 feet 10 inches.



A SPANISH PEASANT BOY.

Murillo.







A SPANISH PEASANT BOY

MURILLO.

SOME doubt appears to have hung, until lately, about the birth and birthplace of Murillo. If, however, the certificate which now forms the authority be correct, Bartolomé Estevan (who afterwards assumed the name of Murillo) was baptized in Seville on the 1st of January 1618. As in most other cases where men have made themselves eminent in any particular pursuit, Murillo is said to have given early proofs of a talent for designing. His parents, wisely attending to these indications, educated him accordingly; and he became a pupil of Juan del Castillo, his relation; an indifferent colourist, but otherwise a painter of some character at Seville. It was here that, almost destitute of models, and for a long time occupied in painting inanimate objects, he conquered the rudiments of art, and attained much of that mechanical skill which is so necessary to the painter. After a time, but not before Murillo had made considerable progress, Castillo quitted Seville for Cadiz; and his pupil was thrown upon his own resources.

In this predicament, Murillo appears to have been compelled to labour on any subject: sometimes painting for the annual fair of Seville, at others manufacturing saints and images, at a cheap rate, for the devout; or assisting to freight ships to America and the Indies with the hasty productions of his pencil. He resided in a quarter of the city called La Feria, a place distinguished for its second-hand clothes and furniture, but renowned above all other things for its execrable pictures. A bad picture in those days was entitled, by way of eminence, "Pintura de Feria;" and not even Murillo was able to vanquish the proverb.

In the twenty-fourth year of his age he set out for Italy, and in his way stopped at Madrid, where he was introduced to Velasquez. This great painter, as admirable in his hospitality as in art, took him immediately under his care, instructing him, and assisting him in all ways. Beyond the necessity or the spirit of rivalry, he exulted in his pupil's success, and yielded him applause without envy, and patronage that produced no pain. Murillo was, in fact, domesticated with him for some time, during which he studied with great care the pictures in the Buen Retiro and the Escurial, and copied the paintings of Spagnoletti and Vandyck, together with some of Velasquez.

His improvement was great and rapid; so much so as to astonish his friend, who on his return from Saragossa in 1644, recommended him to complete his studies in Italy, and offered him every advantage which he or the king's name could command. Murillo, however, neglected this recommendation, and (influenced, as is said, by his sister's entreaties, who depended upon him for support) returned in 1645 to his native city of Seville.

It was then that he painted the eleven historical pictures for the convent of St Francis of Assise; one of which ("*The Death of Santa Clara*") appears to have possessed qualities singularly popular. The holiness of a saint and the beauty of a woman were combined, and attracted, to a more than ordinary degree, both the pious and the profane. Previously to this time, Murillo had won little reputation in Seville; but the case was now different. The pictures of the convent of St Francis crowned him with sudden fame; and raising him at once above Herrera, Pacheco, and the other artists his contemporaries, fixed him the undoubted chief of the school of Seville. It is worthy of remark, that Murillo appears to have owed his excellence to a persevering study of Nature alone. He was content to transcribe what he saw with fidelity, and imitated, instead of inventing the passions. The result of this was then, what it ever must be. The world sympathised with his pictures, and abandoned the mere vanities and dexterities of science for the incomparable beauty of truth.

In 1648, Murillo married a lady of Pilas. She was wealthy and high-born, and by her means he was able to receive, in a suitable manner, most of his distinguished countrymen. It was after his marriage that he painted (in his second or more delicate manner) various religious subjects for the different convents and dignitaries of Seville; amongst others, "*The Nativity of the Virgin*" (one of the pictures taken to Paris), "*St Anthony of Padua,*" portraits of saints and churchmen, and above all, his great pictures for the hospital of St George, which spread his renown to the extremities of Spain. He, moreover, renewed (this was in 1658) the project for establishing a public academy of painting in Seville, after struggling with the hostility and envy of his brother artists, over which, however, he was finally and deservedly triumphant.

In a word, he adorned Seville by his genius; filling her churches and houses with his pictures, and increasing her reputation with his own individual fame. The pictures, indeed, are for the most part gone; scattered over other places and other lands; but the renown of Murillo remains. The last work of art on which he was engaged he left unfinished. He was completing it for the great altar of the Capuchins at Cadiz when he fell sick and died. The picture itself is referred to in his will, and (to give a notion of the price of works of art at that period) he was to receive for it, together with four smaller ones, the sum of 9000 dollars. Murillo died on the 3d of April 1682, a widower; leaving a daughter, who had taken the veil; and two sons, to whom he bequeathed the whole of his moderate property. This consisted of a few houses, with furniture and jewels, and some olive-plantations at Pilas.

The present picture was presented to the National Gallery by M. M. Zachary, Esq. Its height is 1 foot 10 inches, and its width 1 foot 4 inches. It is painted on canvas.

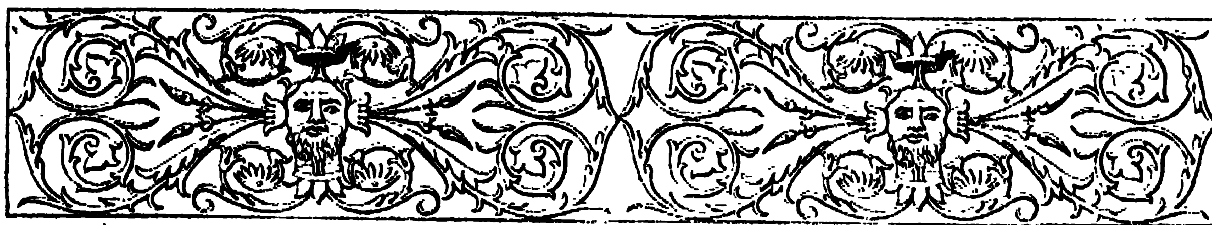


THE BANISHED LORD.

Sir Joshua Reynolds.







THE BANISHED LORD.

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS was born at Plympton, in Devonshire, on the 16th of July 1723. It was originally intended that he should be brought up to the practice of physic; but his strong liking for art induced his father to swerve from this intention, and to permit his son to follow his own inclinations. The enthusiasm of Reynolds showed itself in extreme youth, and continued throughout a long life; but he appears never to have contented himself with those loose and capricious demonstrations of talent, the indulgence in which has made so many bad painters. He had none of the indolence of genius. On the contrary, as early as in his eighth year, he studied "The Jesuit's perspective" with great care! In Italy, when a man, he investigated, resolutely and deeply, the principles of art, as developed in Raffaelle's pictures; and even in the decline of life, the patient attention with which he still continued to seek knowledge (amongst the Dutch masters) enabled him to enrich and give fresh force to the very latest productions of his pencil.

Reynolds was first educated under Hudson, at that time the most eminent portrait-painter in London, but nevertheless an indifferent artist. With him he remained until he excited his jealousy by surpassing him in his own line of art. He then returned to Devonshire, and remained there five or six years; at the expiration of which time, he went, on the invitation of Captain (afterwards Lord) Keppel, to the Mediterranean, and thence proceeded to Rome. It was at this period that he studied the great works of art in the Sistine Chapel and the Vatican, and acquired that reverence for Raffaelle and Michael Angelo which never afterwards forsook him. On quitting Rome, he visited in succession Florence, Venice, and many other of the most remarkable cities of Italy, and finally returned to England, after having been absent three years from his native country.

Reynolds's talents—which, under any circumstances, would have been sufficient to have forced him into notice—at this time insured him rapid distinction. Art was in the lowest possible state; and there does not appear to have been any one else capable of redeeming it from the ignorance and barbarism of the times. He accordingly soon rose to the summit of his profession, passing Kneller, Lely, and the others, his

immediate predecessors, and taking his stand at once by the side of Vandyck himself. He became fashionable as well as celebrated. He was caressed by the great, admired by the skilful, and applauded by all. In this enviable state, increasing, however, gradually in reputation and opulence, and associating with the highest literary spirits of the age, he continued to enjoy his profession, and to exercise a deep and wholesome influence upon art, for the space of thirty years. During this period, he contributed to the Shakespeare Gallery; became President of the Royal Academy; attained the honour of knighthood; composed the notes to Du Fresnoy's "Art of Painting;" delivered his well-known lectures, which are replete with discrimination and good sense; and produced most, if not all, the pictures upon which his great reputation is now so securely founded.

In 1781, and again in 1783, he visited Holland and the Netherlands. Between these two journeys, however, he suffered a slight paralytic shock; but recovering, he continued to paint till 1789, when, having lost the sight of an eye, he was compelled to abandon his profession. He continued, indeed, to receive his friends till the latter part of the year 1791; but he then fell into a state of despondency, and at last died on the 23d of February 1792, at the age of sixty-nine years.

There can be but one opinion, in the minds of competent judges, as to the position which Sir Joshua Reynolds ought to occupy amongst the portrait-painters of this country. He is, beyond a question—the first. For truth and character—for style, breadth, and charm of colour—and, above all, for that greatest virtue in an artist, simplicity, he was and is without a rival. If his imagination was not of the loftiest order, there was yet a natural grace about his mind which (in his particular department of art) compensated for the want of the higher quality. And if his invention was not inexhaustible, yet his admirable good sense and love of nature saved him from those eternal repetitions of himself, which have marked at once the egotism and poverty of so many artists. It is not easy to assign him any precise station amongst the great painters of portraits; nor is it material to do so. Wherever he may stand, it is amongst the most illustrious. In the list of his predecessors there are Titian and Velasquez, Rubens and Vandyck, Holbein and Rembrandt; all great names, it is true; but there is not one of them (Titian alone excepted) with whom it can be said that Sir Joshua Reynolds may not stand, at least, in comparison. It is no slight proof of his genius, that he was able to triumph over the most detestable costume that ever disgraced the human figure. He rescued Nature from this absurd thraldom, and (unlike Kneller and Lely, and the rest, who sank under the difficulties of dress) he transmitted unimpaired to posterity—"in their habit as they lived"—all the spirit, and beauty, and intelligence of his time. He was familiar with all kinds and conditions of men. He painted the warrior, the scholar, the courtier, the wit, the child of the noble, the poor boy with his fishing-net—and other varieties of the "great animal," *Man;* and was equally successful in all. He was excelled, in some respects, by other painters of portrait; but, in simplicity and positive grace, he was surpassed by none.

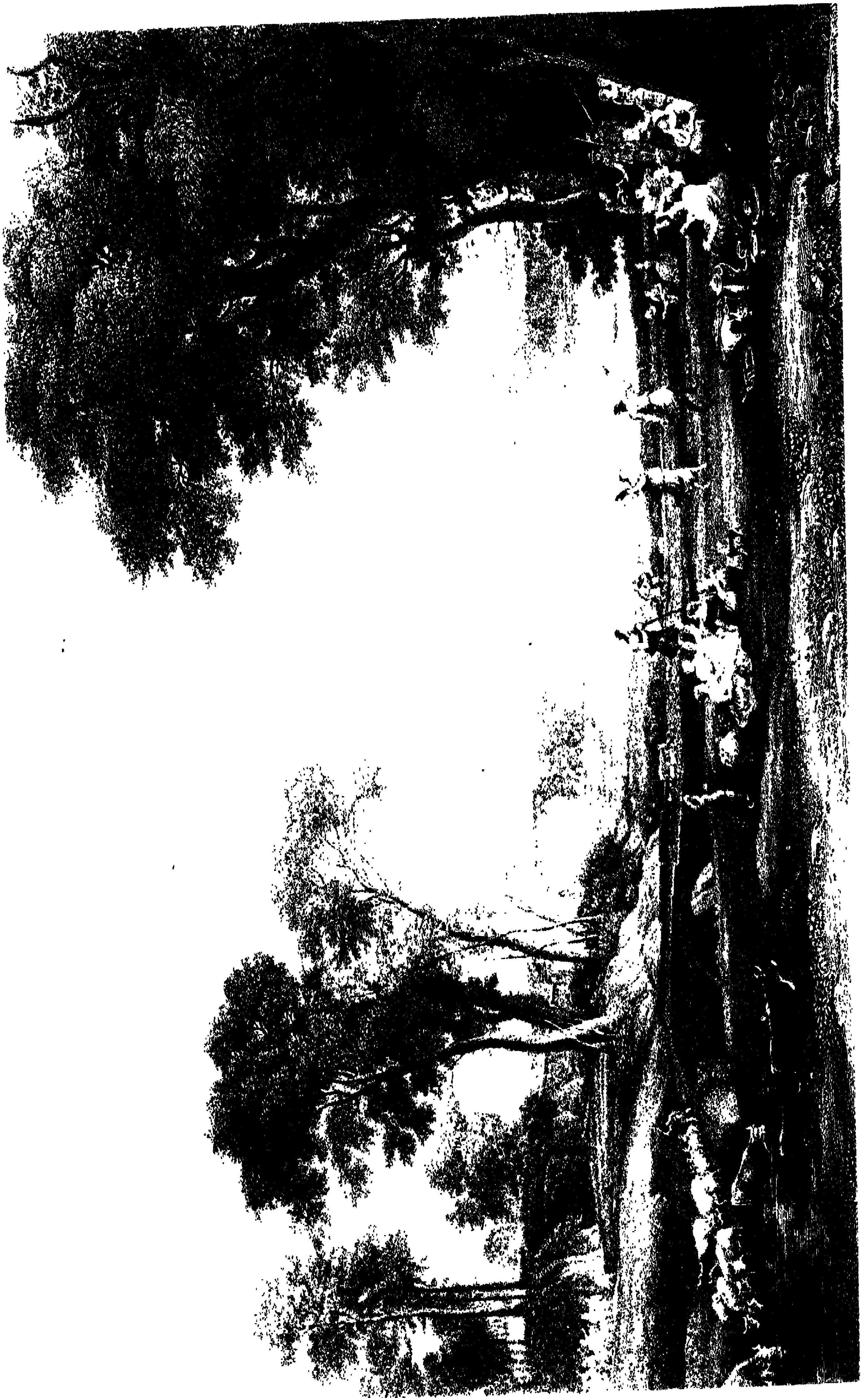
The present picture was presented to the Gallery by the Reverend William Long. The title of "*The Banished Lord*" is merely fanciful, and one to which it has no claims. It is painted on canvas. Its height is 2 feet 5 inches, and its width 2 feet.

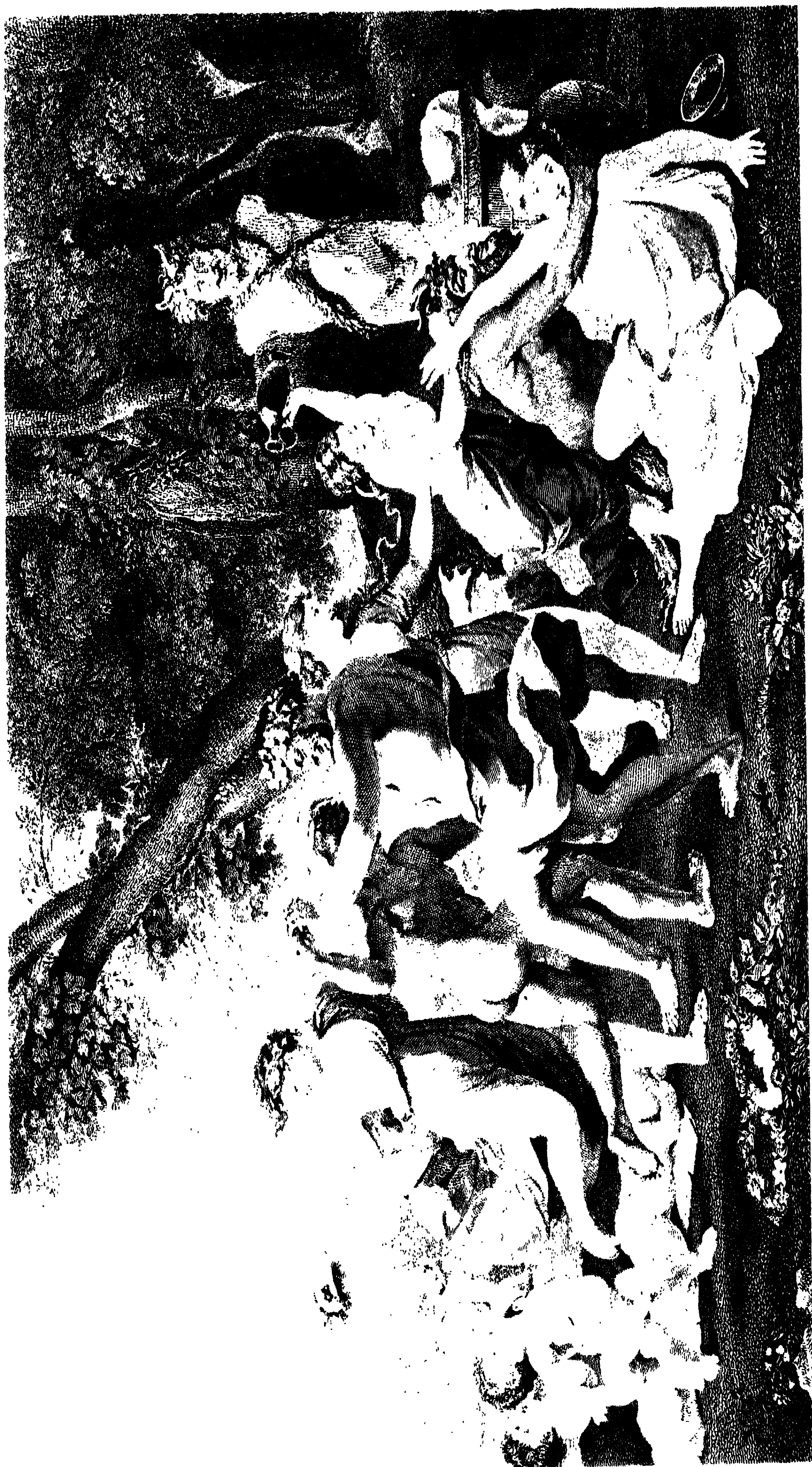


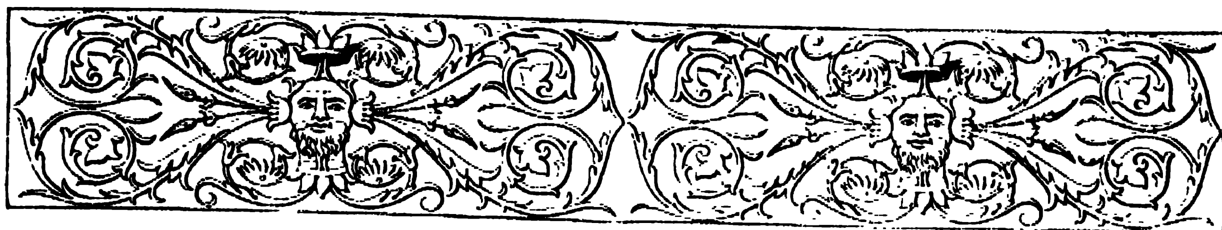
THE MARRIAGE FESTIVAL OF ISAAC AND REBECCA.

Claude.









THE MARRIAGE FESTIVAL OF ISAAC AND REBECCA.

CLAUDE.

SOME account has already been given of the celebrated painter Claude Lorraine, in a previous page. Nevertheless, something still remains to be said concerning the character of his genius.

Claude was a painter of greater power than is commonly apprehended. Critics are too apt, in general, to affix complimentary epithets to the hasty and violent efforts of artists, which, in reality, betray little more than the frenzy and *weakness* of their authors. In painting, we talk of the "gloomy power" of Caravaggio; the "stormy brush" of Tintoret; the "savage grandeur" of Salvator Rosa (we are referring only to his *historical* subjects; his landscapes were eminently fine):—we hear of "eccentric sublimity," of "misdirected power," &c. &c., and are lost in a hubbub of words which have no meaning; or if they have any, mean for the most part that the artist has attempted something—and *failed*. How is it that we never hear Titian, or Raffaelle, or Shakespeare, spoken of after this fashion? Why, it is because their minds were so secure and well-balanced, so complete and harmoniously disposed, that no one part was exaggerated, or made prominent, at the expense of the rest. It was with them as with some complete specimen of the human figure, where nothing is so conspicuous or out of place as to call for especial commendation. It is the symmetry and compactness of the whole, which, while it deceives the immature critic, affords to the experienced observer the best evidence of perfection and strength.

Besides, whenever a lasting impression is produced on the world, it must assuredly be produced by *power* of one kind or other. As in medicine there is the narcotic as well as the acid, the spirit, and the volatile essence; so in art there is the power of shedding tranquillity and repose, as well as the power of tempestuous light and darkness, of combination, and colour, and expression; which last is the highest of all. It is, in fact, inwoven amongst all the others, and gives value to each; spreading itself over even inanimate objects, and giving them character and beauty; relieving from commonplace and monotony the glades of Gaspar and the trees of Claude, as well as the grand and intellectual faces which look upon us from the panels of Titian and Raffaelle.

This completeness and well-poised mind on the one hand, and on the other the power of investing all things with the aspect and spirit of tranquillity, Claude Lorraine possessed. All seems to have proceeded from him without effort—his trees, and lawns, and slopes; his beautiful hills and far-off continents, and his seas laughing and sparkling in the sun: all seem to have risen up gradually but surely, and taken their station, like things which obey the charming-wand of an enchanter. The truth is, that Claude *felt* the beauty of what he beheld; and to transfer his impressions to the canvas became, as a consequence, a matter of comparative facility.

We have the permission of a friend, who thinks much as we do on matters of art, to transfer to our pages some of his manuscript referring to the great painter whose merits we have been speaking of:—

ON THE PICTURES OF CLAUDE.

"Let those whom Fortune hates, or Love hath pained,
Seek quiet in the scenes of Claude Lorraine.
Harmonious thoughts—delighted noonday dreams
(Wherein the Soul, passing the lazy sense,
Imagines and creates an earth like Heaven)
Filled up the circle of his days. He dwelt
In regions of divine tranquillity,
Courting the sunset and the blooming dawn:
And what he wooed he won! For so it is,
That they who are sincere must ever win
Something of good—joy, or content, or glory;
The orange flower which smiles from bridal heads,
The virgin lily, or the conquering bay.
Therefore it was, that Claude into his power
Received the things he loved (the tender light,
The beauty, and the calm), and gave them forth
A hundredfold more fair; until his fame
Grew brighter than the skies he drew so well,
And hallowed him till death."
"And after death?"—
"——And after death he lay embalmed in it,
The spirit and poet of serenity.
He died, if those can die whose deeds remain
For ever—through all ages yet to come.
He died; but through the airy landscapes still
His Roman temples shine, his aqueducts,
His marble arches, his half-shaded streams,
Through which the cow-herd drives his weary charge,
Loitering at set of sun: Still through his mists
Loom the blue mountains: Still the maiden Dawn
Comes burning from the dark, like one whom love
Has kissed to beauty and the rose's grace;
And still, ah! *still* "the Enchanted Castle" stands,
A lonely thing upon a faery shore—
Attracting yet repelling—all unknown—
Without tradition, without history,
And yet more famous from the want; for Fear,
And Dream, and wild Imagination, all
Fill it with wonder. So no mortal step
Dare tread upon its threshold. If the barque
Of wandering stranger should be drawn too near,
'Tis told that women, pale and beautiful,
Rise from the waters, at a signal soft
(Touched by the lady of the place), and bind
The fainting wretch 'round with their snaky hair,
And sing him down to death!"

The present picture was painted, it is said, for the Duke de Bouillon, in 1648. It illustrates the particular genius of its author. The historical part of the work is sufficiently in keeping with the rest; but it is the landscape, with its balmy summer atmosphere, its rich foreground, and lovely distances (in every part of which the invention and judgment of the artist are conspicuous), that constitutes its value. It formed, originally, one of the Angerstein Collection.

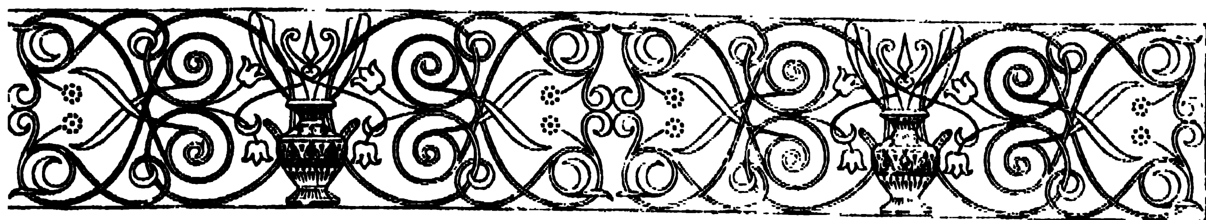
The picture is 6 feet 7 inches long, and 4 feet 11 inches high.



A BACCHANALIAN SCENE.

Nicholas Poussin.





A BACCHANALIAN SCENE.

NICHOLAS POUSSIN.

NICHOLAS POUSSIN was born in the year 1594, at Andely, in Normandy. He was of a noble, but poor family, his ancestors having been ruined in the wars of the League. John Poussin, his father, was a soldier under Henri Quatre, and was desirous that his son should apply himself to the same pursuit. Nicholas, however, inclining to a more peaceful occupation, gave himself up to literature; and would, beyond a doubt, have succeeded in acquiring a name in letters, had not an acquaintance with Varin (then an artist of some note) turned his thoughts to painting. He requested to be allowed to devote himself to art; and consent being given, he entered with his whole soul into the study of his profession.

At the age of eighteen or nineteen, he left his master Varin, and went to Paris. That capital, however, afforded him but indifferent objects for imitation. He proceeded without much assistance either from masters or models, until chance threw in his way some prints after Raffaelle, which instantly commanded his attention and delight. There is no doubt but that the example of Raffaelle determined his style. He followed the steps of that greatest of painters; not, however, as a servile imitator, but as a pupil eager to catch a portion of his master's inspiration, and striving for fame.

After some vicissitudes, in which he had to encounter poverty and want of patronage, he obtained (through the good offices of his friend Philip de Champagne) some employment at the Luxembourg Palace. By painting occasionally in distemper he acquired a facility of pencil which enabled him to execute an order given him by the Jesuits at Paris, to paint, on the instant, the miracles of their leader, Loyola. In less than a week he accomplished six pictures on this subject, which were required on the occasion of celebrating Loyola's canonisation. This seems to have given an impulse to Poussin's reputation, and, as a consequence, to have led to his acquaintance with the Cavaliere Marino, who became, in the most extensive sense of the word, his patron and friend. Marino is probably known to the English reader as the author of a very striking poem, entitled "The Murder of the Innocents," which Crashaw translated. This liberal man gave Poussin an apartment in his house, and guided him (which he was well able to do) in his studies in Italian and classic literature. To the latter

Poussin was eminently attached; and "no painter," to have recourse to the testimony of Sir Joshua Reynolds, "was ever better qualified to paint such subjects, from his knowledge of the ceremonies and habits of the ancients." He had equal industry and taste; studying always the best models, and studying everything with a care and perseverance that cannot be too much admired. "He diligently applied himself to history and biography, transcribing and translating large portions from different authors, and sought the conversation of such learned and ingenious men as were then to be found in the French Court." Fame and employment were coming gradually to him, when he resolved (in 1624) to go to Rome, to which place his friend the Cavaliere had retired. He continued with Marino till the death of the latter, when he found himself in embarrassed circumstances, against which he struggled with untiring perseverance until the arrival from France of Cardinal Barberini. This prelate's interference relieved him from absolute want, and finally introduced him effectively (by giving him opportunities of displaying his genius) to the admiration of all patrons of art. He painted large pictures for the Cardinal, and for the Pontifical Palace, and in the end was invited back to Paris by a minister of state, and appointed principal painter to Louis the Thirteenth, who was then king.

Poussin remained at Paris as long as the envy and cabals of his brother artists would permit; and when they disgusted him beyond all endurance, he returned once more to his beloved Rome. Here, amidst the beautiful in nature and art, distinguished by the tasteful and the learned, cultivating painting with success, and receding, when he chose, into the tranquillity which had become a passion in his mind, he wore out the remainder of his life, and at last died in the year 1665, full of years and honourable fame.

Nicholas Poussin was remarkable equally for his grace and learning. The beauty and simplicity of his figures will often stand a comparison even with those of Raffaelle himself. His taste was, perhaps, more severe than that of his great model (who threw more character and animation into his groups); but he never, like Polidoro and others, "forgot himself to stone." His colour, which is usually disliked, is, nevertheless, frequently admirable, as being adapted to his subject, and full of gusto. The present picture (which was formerly in the Barberini Palace) is one of the best productions of Poussin. Nothing can surpass the Bacchanalian spirit that reigns and revels throughout. It is full of mirth—staggering with riot, and "dance, and tipsy jollity."

It is painted on canvas, and is 3 feet 1 inch in length, and 4 feet 8 inches in height.



A LANDSCAPE, WITH FIGURES,

REPRESENTING ABRAHAM AND ISAAC JOURNEYING TOWARDS THE MOUNT FOR THE INTENDED SACRIFICE.

Gasparo Poussin.





A LANDSCAPE, WITH FIGURES,

REPRESENTING ABRAHAM AND ISAAC JOURNEYING TOWARDS THE MOUNT FOR THE INTENDED SACRIFICE.

GASPARO POUSSIN.

GASPAR DUGHET, commonly called Gaspar Poussin, was born at Rome in the year 1613. He was of French origin, and, like many other men of genius, of humble parentage, being the son of Jean Dughet, who was the cook of a Roman senator. The father of Gaspar, during an illness of Nicholas Poussin, had shown kindness to that great painter, whom he removed to his own house, and, aided by his wife and daughter, nursed into health. In return for these cares, Poussin rewarded him by marrying his eldest daughter, Maria, and eventually (he having no children) by adopting Gaspar, who was seventeen years younger than himself, as his son. In testimony of this adoption, Gaspar assumed, and ever afterwards retained, the surname of Poussin.

It was under the instructions, and by the advice of Nicholas, that Gaspar began his career in art. The judicious and experienced eye of the elder painter soon perceived the bent of his pupil's genius, and he accordingly counselled him to confine his endeavours to landscape-painting. Gaspar followed this advice, and became, as is well known, eminent. His immediate predecessors were Nicholas Poussin himself (who was no mean painter in this particular line of art) and the celebrated Claude Lorraine, who had already given evidence of his great talents by transcribing and rivalling with his pencil the luxuriance of Italy, but more especially those meridian splendours and gorgeous sunsets which hang over, and almost hide with their brightness, the steaming wastes of the Roman Campagna.

With such a formidable adversary, Gaspar did wisely in selecting different objects, or at least in treating them in a different manner. Or it might be that it was less for the sake of arriving at an original style, than an actual preference in his own mind, that induced him to turn aside from the sunny landscapes of Claude, and wander amongst more secluded places, and in more perfect solitudes.

The excellence of Claude's pictures consists mainly in the beauty of his distances,

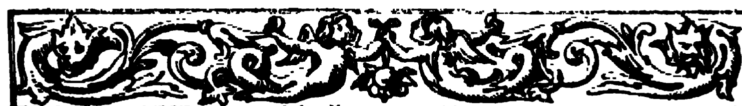
in the repose of his scenes, in his harmonious arrangement of parts, and in that bright and balmy atmosphere which he delighted to throw, like a spell, over his scenery. He was the wizard whom the sun and the air obeyed. No one has done so much with space and light, and the enchantments which "distance lends," as he. The scenes of Gaspar are generally more confined than those of Claude, and more literal. He drew less upon his imagination, and resorted less to the temples and buildings and common accessories of the landscape composer. He lost by this choice much of magnificence, and somewhat of variety and general effect; but he gained in truth and simplicity, and frequently in a condensed interest. Gaspar Poussin does not endeavour to surpass the rainbow with his colours, nor lose himself in misty and interminable distances; but the freshness and youth of April seem to hang upon his trees; and his woods and glades are such as the traveller still beholds as he pauses in the romantic depths of Tivoli and Terni.

In severity of design, and in the savage nature of his subject, Gaspar Poussin not unfrequently assimilates himself to Salvator Rosa. Instead of a choral dance or a Pagan procession, or a herd of cows driven homewards at sunset (which last Claude has presented almost to satiety), he contents himself with a small group of nymphs or travellers, or perhaps with a single figure; and thus illustrates, in a more complete manner than the other, the spirit of loneliness and undisturbed tranquillity which characterise the beautiful region which he delighted to portray. It may be said that Claude Lorraine was the painter of *repose*, and Gaspar Poussin of *solitude*.

Gaspar Poussin died at Rome in the year 1665, when he was sixty-two years old, having passed through life without encountering any great vicissitudes.

In the present picture, he has expatiated more than was usual with him; the distances being as extensive as those of Claude himself. His firm and decisive pencil, however, is conspicuous throughout; and it is not without reason that the composition and other excellences of this picture have occasioned it to be valued as one of the very finest of his works. It was one of the late Mr Angerstein's Collection, and was previously in the Colonna Palace at Rome.

The picture is 6 feet 6 inches long, and 5 feet 3 inches high.

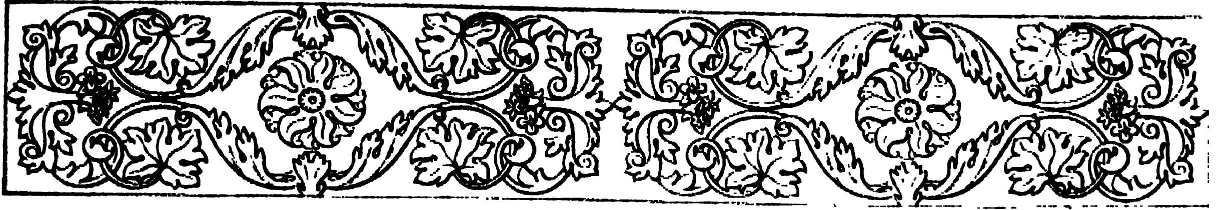


PORTRAIT OF LORD HEATHFIELD.

Sir Joshua Reynolds.







PORTRAIT OF LORD HEATHFIELD.

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

EORGE AUGUSTUS ELIOTT, afterwards Lord Heathfield, was a native of Roxburghshire, in Scotland; and entered, when very young, as a volunteer, into the Prussian army. After having run the usual gradations, and distinguished himself as a tactician, he was intrusted with the command of Gibraltar in the year 1775; and he defended it against the combined fleets of France and Spain with a courage and success that are noted down in triumphant letters on the page of our English history.

The portrait here given was painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds after the great event which distinguished Eliott's life.

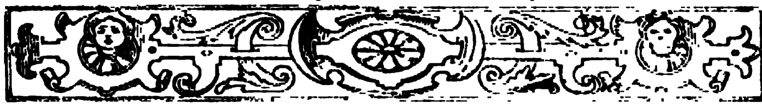
It is not easy to concentrate, in a single look, the entire spirit and character of a man who has faced and conquered a hundred thousand enemies, backed by three hundred cannon. This was the force opposed to the garrison of Gibraltar; and it was directed with skill and perseverance, and supported by floating batteries of a kind, till then, unknown in naval warfare. "Four hundred pieces of the heaviest artillery," says the historian, "were playing at the same moment. The whole Peninsula seemed overwhelmed by the torrents of fire which were incessantly poured upon it." And in this terrible conflict the man whom we are now looking upon was the directing mind. Is it not asking too much of the painter, who, after everything is said, practises but a "limitary" art, to condense all that the hero thinks and feels—or even to show distinctly all the traces that thought and feeling have *left* upon the human countenance, after days of glory or disaster, in six small inches of an oaken panel?

Yet men are sometimes induced to wonder that more is not done with the heads of poets and heroes. They desire to see the particular temperament colouring the visage—the individual genius written on the eye; forgetting that genius itself, although not "dead," often "sleepeth," or becomes inert or languid and inexpressive, in the wearisome atmosphere of the artist's study. We do not say this in extenuation of the present portrait: Sir Joshua Reynolds has done justice to the warrior of Gibraltar; not simply in respect of his personal likeness (of which we know nothing), but of his character.

There is no mistaking the keen, watchful, intelligent look of the commander, nor the quiet resolute bearing of the man.

Having touched upon the merits of Sir Joshua Reynolds in a previous notice, we shall not trouble the reader with any repetition of our eulogies here. It is sufficient to say that the picture of Lord Heathfield is not unworthy the reputation of the greatest portrait-painter that has yet distinguished the English school.

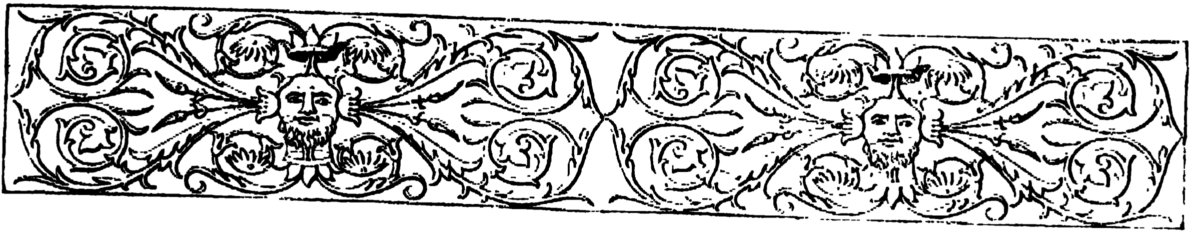
This picture formed part of the Angerstein Collection. It is painted on canvas, and is 3 feet 8 inches wide, and 4 feet 8 inches high.



THE WATERING-PLACE.

Thomas Gainsborough.





THE WATERING-PLACE.

THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH.

THE present is one of the most agreeable productions of Gainsborough. It exhibits a rich and varied prospect, in which luxuriance and beauty vie with each other in attracting our admiration. In some pictures of this artist we encounter artificial objects, which divide our curiosity with the natural scenery before us; but in the present landscape, Nature reigns paramount. There is nothing else of sufficient importance to distract our attention, or draw away our homage from her. The painter has evidently felt, and as a consequence makes the spectator feel, the whole merit of his subject—the waving trees, the fresh and breathing incense of the fields,

"The glory of the grass, the splendour of the flower."

Gainsborough was not a poetical artist. He could not extricate himself from the literal realities before him. He was an admirable painter after his own fashion; always true and vigorous, and sometimes eminently graceful; always copying with fidelity, and frequently selecting with taste. But his landscapes are (almost invariably, we believe) strict copies or imitations of what he saw. He wanted the *gusto grande*. He had not the crowning faculty of the Imagination. He had not the power of dignifying the little, or of making greater the great. He could not throw the splendour and halo of poetry over an ordinary thing of this world, and bid it start forth a new creation.

Nevertheless, although he did not acquire the fame of a poetical artist, nor even aim at the character of an imaginative painter, he was, in effect, superior to many who did. For instance, the later painters of the Italian schools for the most part affected the "great style." They were more ambitious than Gainsborough, and possibly superior to him "in a certain routine of practice, which to the eyes of common observers has the air of a learned composition;" but this is of little moment. They were deficient in more weighty things—in all those qualities which constituted the merit of the English painter—in truth, vigour, and originality; in all, in short, that constitute the excellence of art. "For my own part," says Sir Joshua Reynolds (and we concur entirely with him), "I confess I take more interest in, and am more captivated with,

the powerful impression of Nature which Gainsborough exhibited in his portraits and in his landscapes, and the interesting simplicity and elegance of his little ordinary beggar children, than with any of the works of that school" (he has been referring to "the late artists of the Roman school") "since the time of Andrea Sacchi, or perhaps we may say Carlo Maratti; two painters, who may truly be said to be '*Ultimi Romanorum.*'"

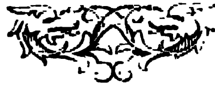
Compared with Claude and Turner, Gainsborough must be pronounced to be a prosaic artist; but he probably made a stronger and certainly a more direct impression on ordinary minds than either of those celebrated painters. He is to them what the poet Thomson, or perhaps Cowper, was to our great Milton; less grand, less imaginative, less of a master in his art, but exceeding them in popularity, and well deserving that his name should be inscribed near theirs on the never-ending roll of Fame.

The present picture was presented to the National Gallery by Lord Farnborough. It is 5 feet 11 inches in length, and 4 feet 10 inches in height.

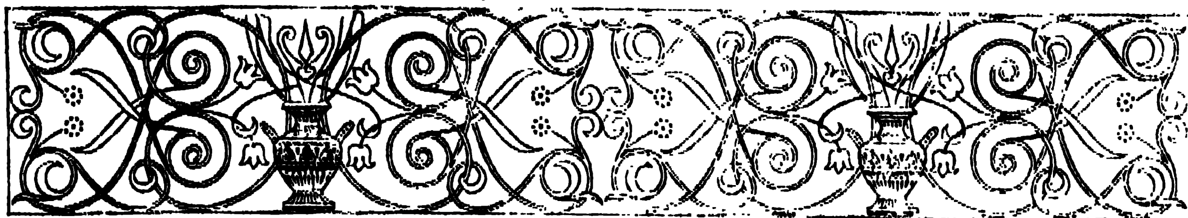


THE EMPEROR THEODOSIUS REFUSED ADMITTANCE TO THE CHURCH.

Vandyck.







THE EMPEROR THEODOSIUS REFUSED ADMITTANCE TO THE CHURCH.

VANDYCK.

AT the conclusion of a florid panegyric on the virtues of Theodosius, Gibbon informs us that, "except the heretics, whom he persecuted with implacable hatred, the diffusive circle of his benevolence was circumscribed only by the limits of the human race."

This encomium is followed by a schedule of his faults; amongst which his self-abandonment to the "trifling pleasures of a luxurious court"—"intemperate sallies of passion" (which, we are told, he "studied" to suppress)—and vengeance, that slaked itself in an ocean of blood, are the most conspicuous.

It is curious to observe how easily Princes earn the good word of historical writers. The inhabitants of Antioch, groaning under edicts of taxation, which were then "an extraordinary and oppressive burden," and finding that their complaints, made in "pathetic and respectful language," were treated by their "haughty rulers as a criminal resistance," proceeded to manifest their discontent by breaking in pieces the statues of Theodosius and his family. This tumult, which, it is said, "sufficiently declared the impious and treasonable wishes of the people," was immediately suppressed, and the city for many days held in suspense as to whether or not its inhabitants were to be put to the sword, and its buildings levelled with the ground. The "clemency" of the Emperor, however, prevailed; he was content with causing suspected persons to be tortured, and the criminals, with their wives and children, to be reduced to utter poverty.

The good city of Thessalonica, however, did not fare so well. It is true that some of its citizens had earned condign punishment. The imprisonment of a brutal charioteer having deprived them of the pleasures of the Circus, they rose upon the governor (with whom they had had previous disputes), and slew him, together with several of his principal officers. The natural course, under such circumstances, would have been to have inquired into the case, and to have inflicted due punishment on the offenders. But, as his historian says, "the fiery and choleric temper of Theodosius *was impatient of the dilatory forms of a judicial inquiry;* and he resolved, hastily, that

the blood of his lieutenant should be expiated by the blood of the guilty people." And in pursuance of this atrocious resolution, the people of Thessalonica were treacherously invited, "in the name of their Sovereign," to the games of the Circus, and there, to the amount of fifteen thousand victims, *murdered* without distinction! Neither sex nor age—neither nobility of character nor stainless innocence were spared. Men, women, and children, "old age and infancy"—many whose faces were familiar to their tyrant from his long and frequent residence at the place, were massacred without distinction, by orders of Theodosius "*the Great.*" It was for this diabolical act that "Saint Ambrose" (who, however, had previously commended to the Emperor the tumultuous burning of some places of worship belonging to Jews and Valentinians) prohibited him from re-appearing in the church. The Emperor, we are told, after he had "lamented his rash fury, proceeded in the accustomed manner to perform his devotions in the great church of Milan. He was stopped in the porch by the Archbishop, who, in the tone and language of an ambassador of Heaven, declared to his Sovereign that private contrition was not sufficient to atone for a public fault, or to appease the justice of the offended Deity."—GIBBON, xxvii.

This act of Saint Ambrose, who was then Archbishop of Milan, constitutes the subject of Vandyck's work.

We do not, we confess, think highly of Vandyck as an historical painter. His excellence lay in Portraits. And he was chiefly a graceful and skilful delineator of rank and elegance. The beauty and chivalry of the Court came duly adorned from his pencil. Although far from wanting when he condescended to humbler subjects (indeed he could bring out with infinite truth, and sometimes with great simplicity, any matter of *fact* before him), yet the Court, or rather the circle wherein the high-born ladies and gallant cavaliers of his time moved, was his proper domain. Here it was that he caught the "distinguished air," the look of gentility, that characterises, almost to a fault, his pictures. How delicate are the features which his women (or rather his ladies) wear! How white and transparent is their skin; how unruffled their aspect; how beautiful, notwithstanding the mannerism, their hands! His cavaliers appear to want the sinews and vigour (both of body and look) which we are apt to ascribe to heroes; but his ladies, had they but a little more animation, would be delightful. The women of his master, Rubens, were coarse, buxom, and frequently inelegant; but they had a spirit, which those of the pupil wanted. There was in the mind of Vandyck (possibly in a slight degree) a certain compromise between nature and art, which he caught doubtless from the atmosphere of rank in which he practised, and transferred gradually and insensibly to his canvas. He formed, in truth, the natural link between the bold and intrepid heads of Rubens, and the sleeping and inanimate beauties of Sir Peter Lely.

This picture (which is copied, for the most part, from a design of Rubens, and indeed contains a portrait of that master) formerly constituted part of the Angerstein Collection. It is painted on canvas, and is 3 feet 9 inches wide, and 4 feet 10 inches high.



THE MARKET CART.

Gainsborough.

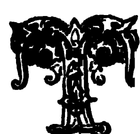






THE MARKET CART.

GAINSBOROUGH.

HOMAS GAINSBOROUGH was born at Sudbury, in the county of Suffolk, in the year 1737. His father being in indifferent circumstances (he was a poor clothier), was unable to afford his son much education, and this drove the boy, who had consequently many hours of leisure, into the fields and woods. He was evidently of an active disposition; for, instead of becoming merely a nut or blackberry picker, or contenting himself with wiring hares, or invading orchards in the apple season, or going to sleep in the sun (rustic resources), he took note of the colour and shapes of things, and became at once an imitator and an ally of Nature. He was not persuaded into art, nor induced to follow it as a means of obtaining bread, but was altogether a spontaneous artist. He did not commence his career by copying the designs of other men, but went at once to the original source, and set down the living trees and waters, the evergreen meadows and the changing skies, just as he found them. This is not the place to consider how far this is or is not a good education for an artist; but it is clear that a person adopting and *persevering* in art under such circumstances, must at least possess one of the elements which go to the constitution of a great man.

After following this course of life for some time, his sketches attracted the notice of competent judges, and he was sent to London, in order that he might receive regular instructions in his profession. Here he supported himself by making ornamental drawings for books, and painting small landscapes, at the same time that he pursued his studies. And he did not limit himself to the department of art in which he had set out, for he studied portrait-painting as well as landscape; resorting to the first as a means of living, and adhering to the last from early and still undiminished love. His portraits, inferior in style and grace to those of Sir Joshua Reynolds, had nevertheless great simplicity and general excellence; whilst his landscapes were altogether unrivalled. He was the first real English landscape-painter; and to him may be traced that brilliant line of artists—all essentially English—who have done more than any other class of men to establish the reputation of our native school.

Wilson (a contemporary of Gainsborough) was undoubtedly a fine painter; but he

M

caught his inspiration from foreign genius rather than from Nature herself. Gainsborough, self-educated and without models, was obliged to go to that grand gallery from which all models are taken. This gave him advantages over his brother artist. It gave him superior vigour, greater truth, and a more determined style; but it also induced a mannerism, from which he never entirely extricated himself. One benefit that arises from looking upon a variety of styles is, that it saves us from pursuing any one style in an inveterate degree. It rescues the painter from mannerism.

Gainsborough, still painting portraits and landscapes as before, removed from London (where he married) to Ipswich, and from Ipswich to Bath. In this last-mentioned place he acquired great fame as an artist, together with some reputation for eccentricity as a man. His madness for music, and his celebrated purchase of Abel's *viol-di-gamba*, are facts known to every one. He died of a painful complaint in 1788, when little more than fifty years of age; and Sir Joshua Reynolds pronounced a great, although qualified eulogium upon him, in the Royal Academy. It does great credit to both parties.

The present picture is a gay and highly coloured piece of art. It has long been familiar to the public, and was presented to the National Gallery by the Governors of the British Institution.

It is painted on canvas, and is 6 feet 1½ inches in height, and 5 feet in width.



SAINT NICHOLAS CONSECRATED BISHOP OF MYRA.

Paul Veronese.







ST NICHOLAS CONSECRATED BISHOP OF MYRA.

PAUL VERONESE.

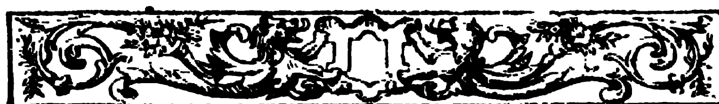
PAOLO CAGLIARI, called Veronese, from the place of his birth, was born at Verona in the year 1523, and died at Venice in 1588. The son of a sculptor, he, nevertheless, abandoned sculpture for painting, and, obtaining the patronage of the Procurator Grimani, went in his company to Rome. Here, in the midst of the masterpieces of Michael Angelo and Raffaelle, he sought inspiration, and studied the higher mysteries of art. But his genius was of another order. The austere and simple graces which he beheld in these high models, must, doubtless, have left a lasting impression on his mind; but his passion was for colour, rather than for form. The proud splendour of Titian possessed more attraction for him than the "*terribil via*" of Michael Angelo, or the almost unadorned beauty of the incomparable Raffaelle. Accordingly, he followed wisely the inclination of his genius, and acquired a renown as a colourist second only to Titian himself. His style differs materially from that of the great Venetian, exhibiting less depth and less intellect, and approaching, in fact, the sensual and voluptuous. After his fashion, however, he is without a competitor. His "*Marriage of Cana*" is, perhaps, the most magnificent picture in the world. There is a gorgeousness—prodigality about it, that not only eclipses the richness of ordinary paintings, but seems to cast back an air of poverty and gloom on works which are really full of splendour.

The superiority of Paolo Veronese (in his particular way) to all other painters, is touched upon by a writer in all respects competent to speak on the subject. He is adverting in terms of eulogy to Rubens, whose forte, he says, "was the processional, the showy, and the imposing." He then contrasts him with Paolo: "Rubens was, undoubtedly, the greatest *scene-painter* in the world, if we except Paul Veronese; and the Fleming to him was flat and insipid. 'It is place which lessens and sets off.' We once saw two pictures of Rubens hung by the side of the '*Marriage of Cana,*' in the Louvre; and they looked nothing. The Paul Veronese nearly occupied the side of a large room (the modern French exhibition-room), and it was like looking through the side of a wall, or at a splendid banquet and gallery, full of people, and full of interest. The texture of the two Rubenses was *woolly*, or flowery, or *satiny*; it was all alike: but

in the Venetian's great work, the pillars were of stone, the floor was marble, the tables were wood, the dresses were various stuffs, the sky was air, the flesh was flesh, the groups were living men and women. Turks, emperors, ladies, painters, musicians—all were real, dazzling, profuse, astonishing. It seemed as if the very dogs under the table might get up and bark, or that, at the sound of a trumpet, the whole assembly might rise and disperse in different directions in an instant."—*The Picture Galleries of England.*

This painting differs somewhat from the usual style of its author, having a rich and solemn magnificence about it, instead of the gorgeousness which is invariably the property of his festive subjects. It is, nevertheless, an eminently fine work, excellent in design, and grand in effect, and adds prodigiously to the value of the National Collection. It belonged, formerly, to the Church of St Niccolo de Frati, at Venice; was purchased by the Governors of the British Institution, and by them presented to the National Gallery.

This picture is painted on canvas, and is 9 feet and 5 inches high, and 5 feet and 9 inches wide.

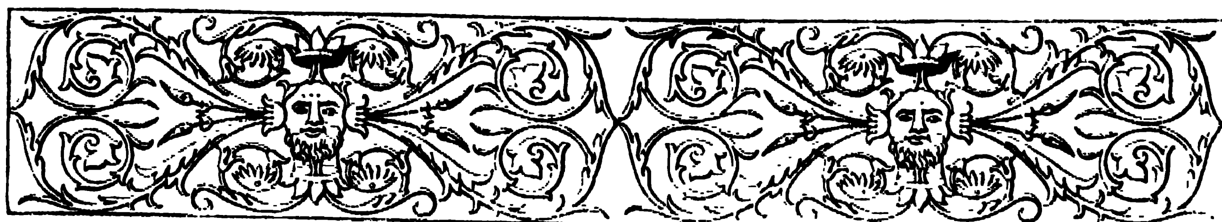


SILENUS.

Annibale Caracci.







SILENUS.

ANNIBALE CARACCI.



WE do not, in this picture, perceive the defect attributed to it by the late Mr Ottley. He complains that the Fauns, who are lifting a Silenus in order that he may gather grapes, are inadequate to their unwieldy task. This amounts, we think, almost to hypercriticism. The Fauns are two young and active men, not drawn particularly slight, although they offer, as might have been expected, an effective contrast to the half-drunken and bloated Silenus. This vast body—necessary, of course, to the subject, and, in fact, very characteristic—presents the only unpleasant object in the picture. But, passing by this part of the subject, all else teems with beauty. The Fauns, the climbing boys, the snatches of light, and, finally, the purple fruit, and the green vines which enclose, and wander, like a beautiful arabesque, round the entire picture, constitute one of the most agreeable designs of the Bolognese painter.

Annibale Caracci was fully competent to deal with a subject of this nature. There was in it no need of dignified form or lofty expression, such as is indispensable to religious history, and such as Raffaelle mingled with feminine softness and inimitable grace, and scattered over his cartoons and frescoes. Neither was there any subtle mystery or profound meaning (such as sometimes lurks in Pagan fables) requiring development. The physical, more than the intellectual—form, more than expression—seem necessary to the constitution of the present work. Not but that expression must elevate anything, and might (as may be seen in a Satyr of Poussin) bestow an intellectual character even on a subject like the one before us. But, although desirable, it is not absolutely essential to its success.

Annibale Caracci was a masterly draftsman; and this quality, together with something more than his usual grace, is conspicuous in the figures of the present work. The objection made to the design, that it was a "silly conceit" of the painter to cause the Fauns to raise Silenus to the grapes, which they themselves were tall enough to gather, strikes us as singularly unhappy. If one Faun had lifted the other to the clusters, which were in the reach of either, there would have been some foundation for the remark. But the object is to raise *Silenus*—who is manifestly unable otherwise to gather the

fruit, and who has desired, in frolic humour (or, possibly, as a piece of epicurism), to pluck the hanging clusters himself. To a gourmand, like the foster-father of Bacchus, it must have been no mean satisfaction to have had his grapes untouched, and with all their bloom upon them.

The present picture, which originally, as it is said, formed "part of the ornaments of a harpsichord," came from the Lancellotti Palace, and was afterwards the property of the Rev. William Holwell Carr, who bequeathed it to the National Gallery.

It is painted on board, and is 2 feet and 11½ inches long, and 1 foot and 9 inches high.

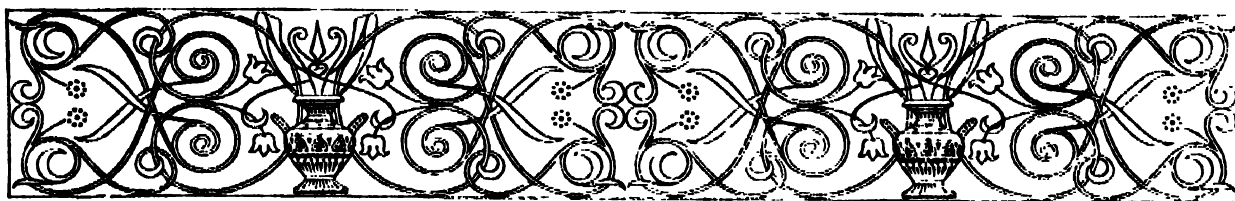


A PASTORAL LANDSCAPE, WITH FIGURES.

Claude.







A PASTORAL LANDSCAPE, WITH FIGURES.

CLAUDE.

THE genius of Claude was sufficient to extenuate (almost, indeed, to hallow) the sameness of conception, which, either from indolence or other causes, is so remarkable in his pictures. Were it not for this, the spectator would become speedily tired with his almost endless reiteration of a favourite idea. We have, repeated a hundred times, the same airy distances—the same rich and broken foreground—the same deep rivulet or shadowy pool—the same herd wending their way homewards at set of sun. And yet, such is the talent of the painter, that his pictures never fatigue us. Either he has originally chosen his subject so well, or has brought out the same objects in such different relief, or has woven his tissues of light and shade so dexterously and harmoniously, that, in spite of all obstacles, he holds his way with us to the last.

This is one of the many triumphs of genius. Whether it be Giotto and his circle—Guido and his colour-grinder—or Claude Lorraine himself, elevating a commonplace, from insignificance to beauty, by the spirit of his art, the same *mens divinior* is apparent in all. Nothing but this could have rescued the rich sentences of Milton from monotony, and carried us onwards, in the full tide of admiration, to the close of his immortal story. Should the poet or the painter ever forget himself so far as to repine because he has not *all* that the rich man boasts of, in addition to his own more valuable store, let him but reflect that he has this high quality that we have adverted to—the one great, and perhaps only material distinction between man and man, and rest content.

> "He who descends
> To covet the coarse dust the miser hoards,
> Will straight grow blind, and, in base darkness lost,
> Forget his first love, Nature."

Among other things, it is no trifling satisfaction for a painter or writer, enthusiastic in his art, to reflect, that many of his predecessors have quitted low employments and lucrative situations, to give themselves up to their high and ambitious calling. If this

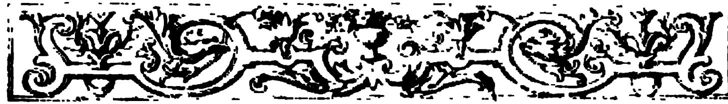
determination has sometimes worn the look of imprudence, it has, at the same time, generally argued a spirit utterly opposed to the sordid and the mean. The story of Claude, abandoning his humble trade for the uncertain profits of a painter's life, is universally known. There was, surely, a natural love of elegance in his mind, as well as a sense of power, which induced him to turn his thoughts to painting. Indeed, were there any doubt upon this point, we have only to look upon the landscapes which his pencil has made so famous—his verdant glades and jetting fountains—his balmy skies and azure waters—his trees and slopes, all redolent of spring—his quiet herds—his shepherds ever musical—his Roman temples, and enchanted castles,

> "Opening on the foam
> Of perilous seas in fairy lands forlorn,"—

in order to convince ourselves of these things, and to show us that he obeyed a higher impulse than mere caprice. Nature intended him for a great painter, and he had wisdom enough not to disregard her intimations.

The present picture, which is a charming composition, although replete with the mannerism which we have hinted at, appears to have been painted in the year 1645, and formed part of the Angerstein Collection.

It is painted on canvas, and is 6 feet 5 inches long, and 3 feet 4 inches high.



CHRIST TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS.

Rembrandt.







CHRIST TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS.

REMBRANDT.



WE have already borne testimony to the merits of this great painter, in our notice of his portrait of "*The Jew Merchant.*" We shall not, therefore, trouble the reader with a repetition of our eulogy. To an artist, indeed, praise of Rembrandt appears to be a thing purely superfluous. He is like the ancient who retorted the eulogy on Hercules with, "Who thinks of blaming Hercules?" But, in ordinary eyes, the great Fleming does not always find favour; nor, to confess the truth, does he always deserve it. That he possessed most high qualities, and was one of the great masters of art, is beyond a question. His genius was daring; and his effects were at all times grand and powerful. He shrank from no subject. He touched all things—the Holy and the profane, the king and the clown, the warrior and the money-changer, the jewelled turban and the beggar's rag—and lifted them all into importance—into grandeur, by dint of his "so potent art." Nevertheless, in some things he was still found wanting; for dignity and grace were not within the compass of his pencil. His strength lay in terror. He was unacquainted with the quiet power of beauty, or else it was beyond his control. It is this defect that narrows the circle of his admirers, and detracts from his popularity, if not from his fame. His imagination, in our opinion, was grand, but vague: producing tremendous effects; scattering portents and dismay; suggesting, rather than defining, sublime ideas. In the truth and precision of his portraits, indeed, he was unsurpassed; but, in his historical (or poetical) subjects, where he had to draw on his invention, he wanted, as it appears to us, one of the high requisites in art, which are to be met with only amongst Italian painters.

The present work is merely a sketch; but it possesses the elements of a great picture, and (the definite here not being so essential as in most instances) it is not open to the same objections which may, perhaps, be urged against some others of the painter's works. It is, indeed, full of that wild and soaring character which belongs to those awful times when "there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour"—when "the sun was darkened and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst."

The following verses, which are sufficiently illustrative of the qualities of Rembrandt, deserve to be better known. They are the production of an American painter,

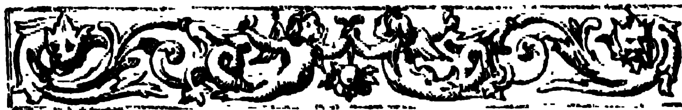
Mr Allston, who during his residence in this country exhibited great promise of excellence in his art.

SONNET

ON REMBRANDT, OCCASIONED BY HIS PICTURE OF "JACOB'S DREAM."

"As in that twilight, superstitious age,
When all beyond the narrow grasp of mind
Seemed fraught with meanings of supernal kind—
When e'en the learned philosophic sage,
Wont with the stars through boundless space to range,
Listened with rev'rence to the changeling's tale;
E'en so, thou strangest of all beings strange—
E'en so thy visionary scenes I hail;
That like the ramblings of an idiot's speech,
No image giving of a thing on earth,
Nor thought significant in reason's reach—
Yet in their random shadowings give birth
To thoughts and things from other worlds that come,
And fill the soul, and strike the reason dumb."

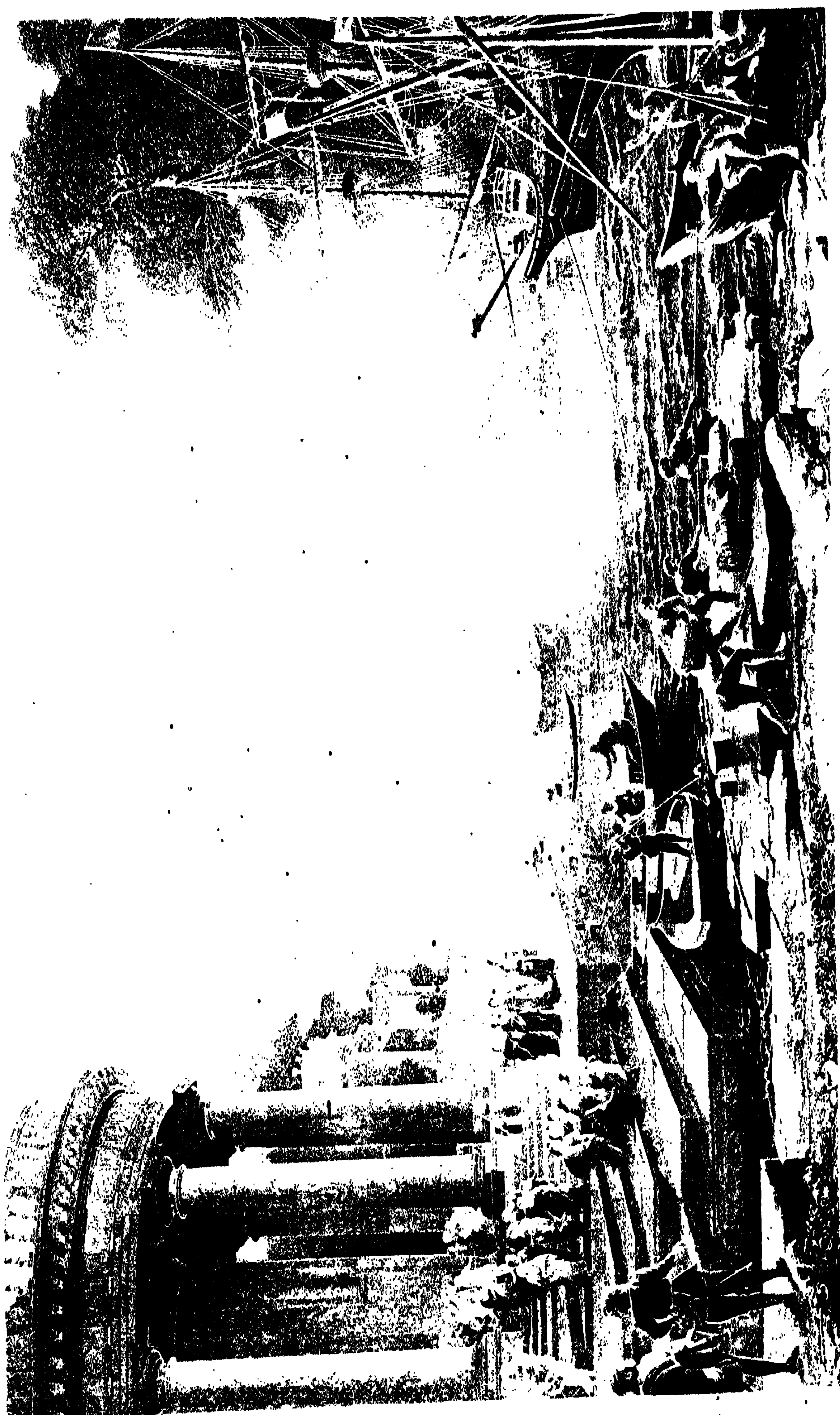
The present work was given to the National Gallery by the late Sir George Beaumont. It is painted on wood, and is 1 foot and 1 inch high, and 11 inches wide.

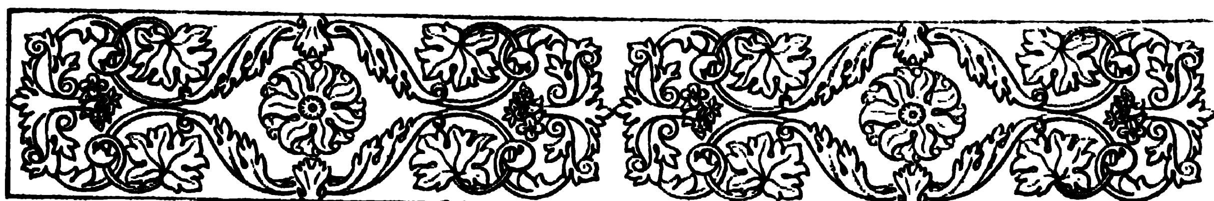


THE EMBARKATION OF SAINT URSULA.

Claude.







THE EMBARKATION OF SAINT URSULA.

CLAUDE.



HIS picture (one of those which occur in the *Liber Veritatis*) came from the Barberini Palace, and was brought into England by the late Mr Locke of Norbury. Afterwards, it became successively the property of Mr Desenfans and Mr Angerstein, and formed part of the well-known collection of the latter gentleman, which was purchased by the English Government.

The subject of the present painting is supposed to be "The Embarkation of Saint Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins"—one of those legends which sprang from the fertility of monkish ages; without probability or proportion; not sufficient, we suppose, to shock the huge credulity of the times, but which, like many others, would long since have sunk into irrecoverable oblivion, had it not been for the capricious genius of poets and painters.

It is not easy to guess at Claude's motive for adopting a theme seemingly so impracticable, unless it were to find favour in the sight of the Roman cardinal for whom the work was originally undertaken. Yet even *he*, one would suppose, might have selected a subject which our reason would more readily have accepted, and which would have taxed less heavily the ingenuity of the artist. With all these drawbacks, however, Claude has managed to produce an admirable work. The tumult and brilliancy of the scene—the skilful distances—the broad shadows—the bright atmosphere—the trees—the rippling waters and the vessels shining in the sun,—all conspire to produce a fine and extraordinary effect. The entire picture (full of life, and light, and sound, and motion) is like a beautiful hymn to Morning.

Claude has been praised somewhere for his "temperate splendour"—a happy eulogy; for it is one of the great merits of this artist that he knew how to rein in his fancy, and to "temper" the fire of his genius. He had great power, but he had a cautious judgment also. He adopted legitimate means to attain his ends. He did not attempt to dazzle the spectator, or to subdue his admiration, by a *coup de soleil*. If we might "hint a fault," it would be that he is sometimes *almost* too minute and literal—permitting trivial realities to fetter his imagination, and to interfere with the unity and general effects of his works. But we may be in error in this respect; or if right,

how much, on the other hand, of the good and graceful, does he not offer as a counterpoise!—how much which no other painter has exhibited, or exhibited only in imitation of him! The freshness (almost the fragrance) of dawn—the luxurious stillness of noon —the tranquil glory of the summer sunset,—all haunt about the landscapes of Claude Lorraine, and invest them with an indefinable charm. His pictures, although for the most part pictures only of still life, appear to have remained beyond others, in the memories of men—divine and ineffaceable by Time—talismans, capable of conjuring up bright associations at distant periods of life, like the recollection of a scene of boyhood, or a voice of tenderness never to be forgot.

Almost two centuries have elapsed since the present picture was painted. It has Claude's name inscribed upon it, and bears date the year in which it was executed. Two centuries! And yet the artist has not yet been eclipsed. "Sir Joshua Reynolds" (we quote from Hazlitt's "Essay on the Fine Arts")—"Sir Joshua Reynolds used to say that there would be another Raffaelle before there would be another Claude. His landscapes have all that is exquisite in art and nature. Everything is moulded into grace and harmony; and at the touch of his pencil, shepherds with their flocks, temples and groves, and winding glades, and scattered hamlets, rise up in never-ending succession, under the azure sky and the resplendent sun; while

> Universal Pan,
> Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,
> Leads on the eternal Spring."

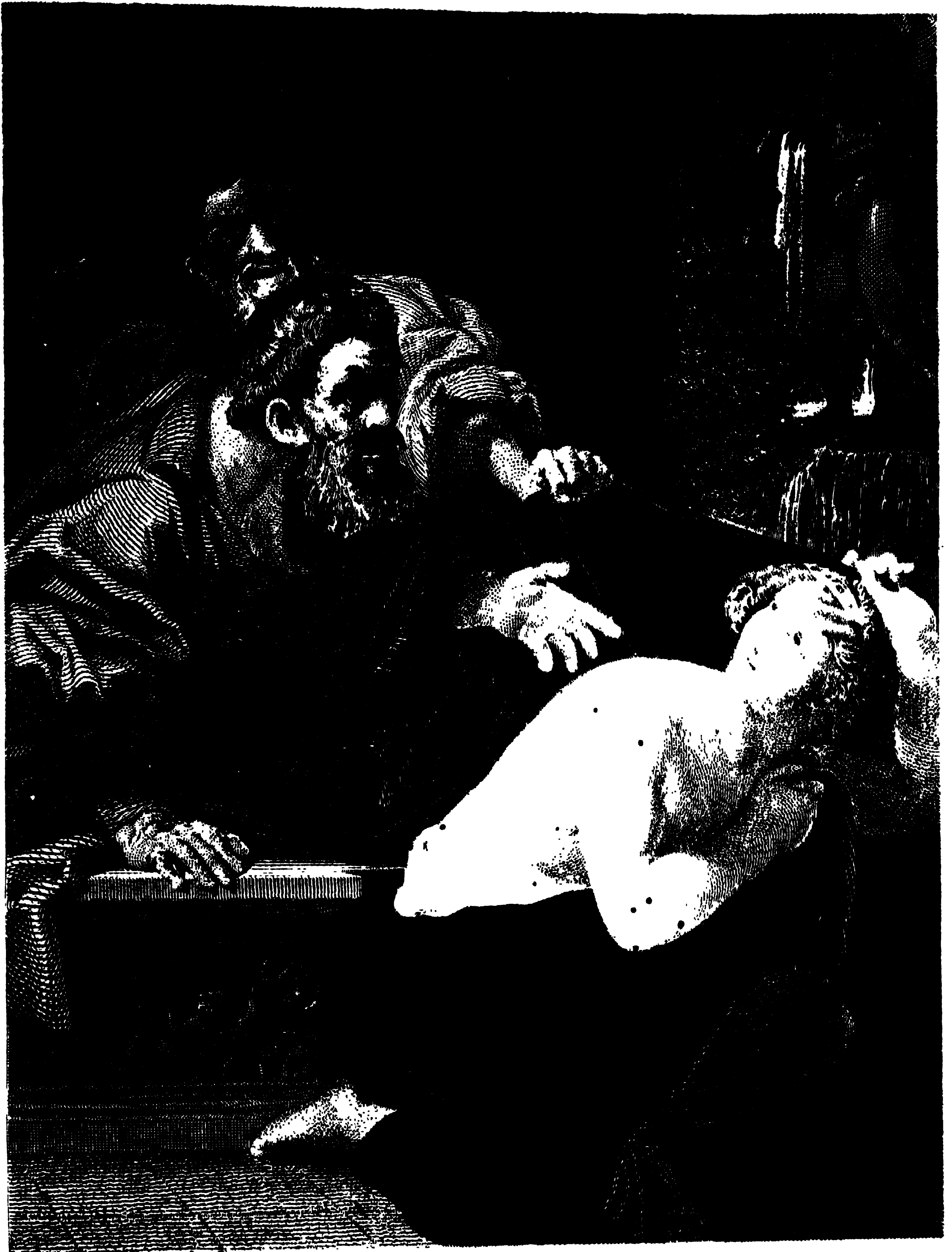
This picture is painted on canvas, and is 4 feet and 11 inches long, and 3 feet and 8 inches high.



SUSANNAH AND THE ELDERS.

Ludovico Caracci.







SUSANNAH AND THE ELDERS.

LUDOVICO CARACCI.

LUDOVICO was the eldest of the Caraccis. More learned, more inventive, more graceful, and altogether more accomplished than his cousins, he led the way up the ascent of Art, where they were able only partially to follow. He was the founder of a school—had his proselytes and imitators, and well deserves the high reputation which Time has awarded him. It was he who gave the impulse to Art in its decline. It was he who stayed the Muse of Painting in her flight, and forced her to hover for half a century more over the beautiful regions where she had once resided. If he was not so essentially original as two or three of his great predecessors, it must be remembered that in his time there was less scope for original genius to show itself. The grand departments in Art were each filled. There was a multitude of models before him. The temptation was to copy, rather than to invent. Nevertheless, in this dilemma, he did almost all that a great painter might be expected to achieve. He studied Nature; he selected gracefully; and produced new combinations, in shape and colour, sufficient to induce his contemporaries to hail him as a master, and posterity to confirm the title. He was the creator of the Bolognese School.

Ludovico Caracci was born in the year 1555, at Bologna. During his apprenticeship in painting, he exhibited, according to his biographers, but slender indications of genius. He was, in other words, not one of those shifting and brilliant meteors which dart, in eccentric curves and rapid transits, over the heaven of Art, and die at last mere exhalations. He studied long and patiently. He considered the means as well as the end, working out carefully, and after minute study, all the wonderful niceties and varieties of Nature; and the result was in proportion to the care bestowed. Whilst others were content to earn a brief reputation by startling thoughts and dazzling sketches, he pursued his sure and quiet way to enduring renown. In the character of his genius—and perhaps even in the very height that he attained—he may be likened to that chaste and delightful painter Nicholas Poussin. The same chastity, the same careful study, the same undeviating perseverance, the same love of all that is beautiful in nature and art, marked and animated each. Poussin, perhaps, had a more learned grace; but

Ludovico Caracci was the more accomplished painter. After establishing a school, and sustaining it through the opposition of his brother painters—through "envy, hatred, and all uncharitableness;" after surviving his cousins, Agostino and Annibale, and living to see their fame allowed, and the name of "The Caracci" a word of honour amongst men, he closed a useful and brilliant life, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. He is known and admired in all countries where the influence of Art has extended; but his full merit may be said to be felt only in Italy. It is there that the greatest of his works still remain.

The present painting is highly effective in point of execution, and is conceived with infinite delicacy. Susannah herself, far from being "deficient in expression," exhibits, to our thinking, the perfection of an innocent and timid girl, shrinking from advances of which she is scarcely able to apprehend the nature.

The picture is painted on canvas, and formed at one time part of the Orleans Collection, and afterwards became the property of the late Mr Angerstein. It is 4 feet 8 inches high, and 3 feet 7 inches wide.

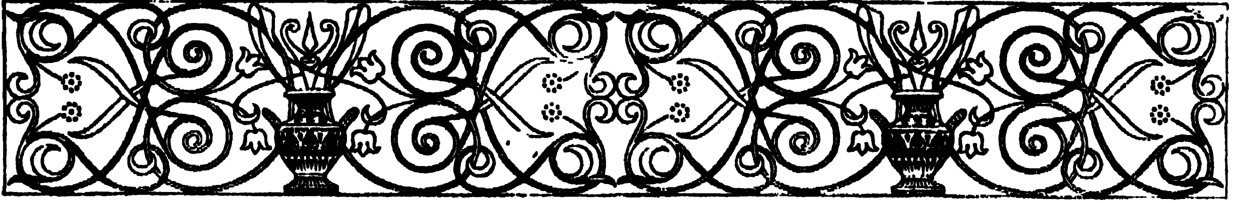


PEACE AND WAR.

Rubens.







PEACE AND WAR.

RUBENS.

IF the character of Rubens rested solely on his works, we should be inclined to pronounce it, to the last degree, sanguine, ostentatious, and adventurous. The flush and animal spirit, the licence and extravagance of his pictures, would often justify such an opinion. And yet, if nothing more were said, the decision would remain imperfect and unjust. For his animal spirits were guided by great power and a thorough knowledge of his art; and if his pencil occasionally wantoned into extravagance, his judgment prevented it from violently outraging discretion. One of the merits of Rubens lay in this union of spirit and good sense. He was powerful, occasionally grand, free, dazzling, airy, fantastic, voluptuous, now and then gross, but never weak or ridiculous. He trod happily the midway between tameness and absurdity. His heads—those of his men especially—have frequently vast gravity and character; whilst over all his subjects—men and women, battles and processions, the crowded hall and the pastoral landscape—he flung that glow and sunshine of colour which, in fact, lifted him into fame, and has made him the model of so many succeeding painters.

The ordinary defects of Rubens are, want of grace (where grace is most needed), want of sympathy with his subject, and, as a necessary consequence, a want of truth and propriety. His actors are too conscious, too obtrusive, too fond of exhibiting whatever their master could best paint. Rubens was famous for his flesh-tints, and for giving a yielding pulpy character to the human body, which no one, perhaps, has ever equalled. Accordingly, his men have naked legs, naked arms, and sinews swelling like those of giants; and his women are fat, fair, and florid, beyond the limits of English admiration. They want sensibility and elegance; and their expression (when they have any) affords little explanation to the story in which they are supposed to take part. In a word, Rubens wanted the dramatic faculty which was so conspicuous in Raffaelle, as well as the grace and tenderness for which that first of all painters is so deservedly celebrated.

The present picture will in a great degree bear out the foregoing strictures. It exhibits the fine glowing colouring of this great Flemish painter—considerable power—

much of his lawlessness, in the mixture of the allegorical with the real—and more grace than was usual with him. It is altogether a brilliant performance, and deserves its place in the National Gallery of England.

As we have spoken of Rubens in a preceding article, we will not repeat our eulogy upon him here. We prefer extracting, for the benefit of the reader, the opinion of an eminent writer, who had a great sense of all that was grand and beautiful in the world of art. He is speaking of the pictures at Blenheim.

"Rubens was the only artist that could have embodied some of our countryman Spenser's splendid and voluptuous allegories. If a painter among ourselves were to attempt a Spenser Gallery (perhaps the finest subject for the pencil in the world, after Heathen Mythology and Scripture History), he ought to go and study the principles of his design at Blenheim. The '*Silenus*' and the '*Rape of Proserpine*' contain more of the Bacchanalian and lawless spirit of ancient fable, than, perhaps, any two pictures extant. Let any one look at the figure of the Silenus in the first-mentioned of these compositions—its unwieldy size, its reeling drunken attitude, its capacity for revelling in gross sensual enjoyment—and contrast it with the figure of the Nymph, so light, so wanton, so fair, that her clear crystal skin and laughing grace spread a ruddy glow, and account for the giddy tumult all around her; and say if anything finer in this kind was ever executed or imagined! In that sort of licentious fancy, in which a certain grossness of expression bordering on caricature, and where grotesque or enticing form was to be combined with free and rapid movements, or different tones and colours were to be flung over the picture as in sport or in a dance, no one ever surpassed the Flemish painter."

The present picture belonged at one time to King Charles the First of England; it was afterwards in the Balbi Palace at Genoa. Some years ago it was brought hither by Mr Buchanan and Mr Irwine, sold by them to the Duke of Sutherland, and by him presented to the National Gallery.

It is painted on canvas, and is 9 feet 8 inches in length, and 6 feet 5 inches in height.



THE HOLY FAMILY.

Correggio.







THE HOLY FAMILY.

CORREGGIO.

THE present picture was brought into England from Madrid, or the Escurial, by Mr Wallis, an English artist; and it has been conjectured to have been one of those paintings which (according to Lanzi) the Duke of Mantua presented to the Emperor Charles the Fifth of Spain. This must, perhaps, remain problematical; but no question can exist, we think, as to the intrinsic merit of the work itself. It is of undoubted excellence.

Considered merely as an exhibition of the grace and tenderness of the maternal character, and as not having any divine reference, it would be difficult to produce another picture which surpasses it. Indeed, supposing it to aim at representing the "Holy Family" itself, it would not be easy to show to what fortunate work of art the palm of superiority is to be awarded. It is not unusual to hear a painter complimented on having achieved that wonderful union of the terrestrial and heavenly natures which distinguished the Son of God. Every artist of eminence has imposed upon himself this arduous task. Every event in the life of Christ has been repeatedly sought, and has been dwelt upon with an almost painful care, in order to illustrate at once the homage and genius of painters. Nothing has been left unattempted from the cradle to the cross; and yet (not to speak irreverently) the paradox remains to be accomplished.

In the present case, Correggio has striven to embellish the subject with all his delightful power. It is a combination of tenderness, grace, blandness, suavity. The artist who touched groups of this kind with so charming an effect, and who recurred to them so often, must have assuredly possessed in his own nature something akin to the grace and gentleness which he was so eager to portray. He cast out, with a prodigality that has scarcely a parallel in art, images of love and beauty, for the admiration of times to come. And it may be doubted whether a man was ever capable of imagining anything, so as to attract the sympathy of others, the germ of which was not within himself.

The distinctive mark or sign of Correggio's genius was not grandeur, nor dramatic skill, nor intense expression, nor even elegance or tenderness, although in the last—or

rather in an interweaving of the two last—he was superior to most others. But it lay rather in a certain blandness or amenity of manner which no other painter has ever equalled. To attain this, he abandoned higher claims, and preferred being first in a humbler style, to being second in the greatest. No one who has seen his great work at Parma, will hesitate in admitting that he was capable of reaching a sublimer eminence than the one which he has chosen to surmount.

The heads of Correggio may be said to lie midway between the divine beauty of Raffaelle—or rather between the seraphic airs of Guido, and the domestic tenderness of the Spanish painter Murillo. But his combinations were more beautiful than either. Notwithstanding the occasional voluptuousness of his style, he was in reality more simple than the one, and far more elevated than the other. And his manner was essentially his own. It may be said that he was the originator of *chiaroscuro* in painting. No one before him had ever beheld the true wonders of light and shade. These he subdued to the purposes of art; and, adding their magic to the general charm of his style, he produced marvellous effects, and attracted a train of admirers and imitators, which will scarcely terminate so long as Art itself has an existence.

So little is known, with *certainty*, of the life of Correggio, that we forbear to venture into his doubtful biography.

This picture is painted on panel. It is 18 inches high, and 9 inches and a half wide.

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